DIVINE MEDITATIONS, AND CONTEMPLATIONS upon ſeverall heads of Divinity.

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By G. R.

Compiled for his owne private uſe, and publiſhed for the common good.

PSAL. 1. 1,2.

Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſell, &c.

But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

LONDON,
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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARLE OF WARWICK, &c.

Right Honourable,

IF (having neither merit or other relation to usher the admittance) I seeme to intrude this present of so meane condition (whence soe-

ver it came) upon your Lordſhips favorable conſtruction, and acceptance, the report of thoſe many excellencies in you, imploy'd for the honour of your Prince, and good of your Country, ſo eminently obvious to the eye and admiration of the vertuous, hath imboldned mee to the attempt, and muſt ſerve for excuſe inſtead of a larger apologie.

I have not the will or skill

skill to flatter; my thoughts aime at no baſe ends in this preſumption; and were I not certaine your Honour were as much a lover of goodneſſe, as an enjoyer of greatneſſe, and no leſſe humble than honourable, and would be rather a gratious interpreter, than ſtrict cenſurer, my penne ſhould not have been ſo ambitious, or dared to reſt under ſo noble patronage, nor ſo inconſiderate

conſiderate to have expoſed my owne and others weakneſſe to publique view.

And yet the honeſty of the ſubject, whiles it directs the mind to the conſideration of ſpirituall, and neceſſary concernments for the ſoules welfare, and a Chriſtians profit, may thus farre preſume (as not unworthy the peruſall of the religious, of what degree ſoever, at

times

times convenient) to beſpeake protection for the matter, and pardon for the author, be hee what hee is, and his expreſſions otherwiſe never ſo meane, or deſervings anſwerable.

Pleaſe it therefore your Lordſhip to beare with this challenge, which I have not uſed in the way of my owne right, nor to foreſtall your Lordſhips judgement, (to which I humbly ſubmit in both)

but

but to intimate that by how much the preſent is the more conſiderable for any worth or value to be found in it, by ſo much the more it belongs, and is fit to ſuch worthy patronage to be preſented.

But herein your Honour muſt accept the will for the deed, from him whoſe deſires in the height of their ambition ſoare no higher in that reſpect, than to become

effectuall

effectuall Orators for your Honors prosperity temporall and eternall, and that he may be worthy

Of Your Lordships

command in any

service

G. R.

Meditation 1.

Of proſperity and adverſity.

IN proſperity it may ſeeme we love God, in adverſity we feare God; for proſperity doth cauſe us to praiſe God, and adverſity to pray unto him, and yet in the end it doth then appeare, wee neither love nor feare God. A ſtrange matter indeed, that God ſhould not be beloved of us then, when he ſheweth himſelfe a friend, or not feared, when as a Judge he calleth us to account, and therefore not to be beleeved without good

proofe. He that doth truely love God, loves him for himſelfe; and hee that doth truely feare God, feares him for himſelfe; and finding in him alwayes the ſame cauſe of feare, and love, doth never ceaſe to feare or love; love is his poſſeſſion, feare his Security: what hee hath once gain'd by love, by feare hee is willing to keepe: and he doth as much feare not to loſe, as love ſtill to enjoy. May hee then bee ſaid to love God in proſperity, which in adverſity doth not love him; or to feare God in adverſity, which in proſperity doth not ſo? If then wee cannot endure the change of a proſperous eſtate, but are ſo much diſquieted that we take no comfort in the favour of God, this is a ſure token we loved not God in proſperity, though then we prayſed him: for a little of this love abiding

abiding in us, though at firſt it ſhould not be able to free us from feeling and paſſion, yet at laſt would it ſo calme and ſettle us, that not having the gifts, wee would much more rejoyce in the giver, for whoſe ſake onely all things are worth the having. Likewiſe if good ſucceſſe and better credit doe but inable us to do wrong, without looking to the will of God which awardeth right, this is a ſure token we feared not God in adverſity : for a little of this feare would ſtay us backe from ſuch attempts, though there were none in the world to control us. If not God, what loved wee then in proſperity ? what feared we in adverſity ? Wee loved the gift, not the giver ; wee feared the puniſhment, not the Judge : that is, we neither loved with feare, nor feared with love. Oh unworthy

loue! which doth more reſpect the gift than the giuers good will. Oh vaine feare! which obſerues the mighty but not the Almighty. If Gods gifts bee better welcome to us than himſelfe, *little* is the loue we beare to God: if wee feare Gods puniſhment more than the loſſe of his fauour, ſuch feare is not religious. But will we giue a true teſtimony of our loue and feare towards God? Let us doe that in aduerſity, which euen hypocrites do in proſperity: let us (I ſay) praiſe God, and be content. Againe, let us doe that in proſperity, which euen hypocrites do in aduerſity. Let us I ſay pray heartily vnto God, and commend our ſelues and all our doings vnto him. In a word, let us loue him in aduerſity, and feare him in proſperity: to this purpoſe looke we in proſperity, on the threats of Gods

Gods law, beleeving that none of them ſhall fall to the ground. In adverſity on the promiſes of God firmely truſting to receive comfort and deliverance from him, though as yet wee have no feeling thereof. Shall we not feare ſuch a God in our greatneſſe, who hath ever vengeance ready, and that without reſpect of perſons? Shall wee not love ſuch a God in our weakneſſe, who is ſo faithfull and kinde, that he will never neglect them in their greateſt diſtreſſe which put their truſt in him? Adde this to make us feare in proſperity, that God doth but make us his Stewards; hee may when he will, and hee will, when wee thinke leaſt on it, call us to reckoning: the more we take, the more will be required; and negligence ſhall finde a ſtreighter judgement, than ignorance. And wee

ſhall love God the better in adverſity, if wee conſider that evils are juſtly layd upon us, becauſe of our ſinnes, and yet from Gods mercy; that chaſtiſing us as children we may repent and be ſaved, and that it is farre better that hee ſhould take our eſtate from us, than that our eſtate ſhould take us from him.

Meditation 2.

Of Love.

FAith is the aſſurance of Gods love to a Chriſtian, which faith breedeth in him a love anſwerable to his apprehenſion, though not comparable to the object; and it is a borrowed fire, a drop taken out of the ſea of Gods mercy. Love is a briefe of the Law,

Law, a legacy of Chriſt, the cognizance of a Chriſtian, the life of a good conſcience, the aſſurance of prayer, the ſtrength of devotion, the prop of patience, and in a word, the band of perfection. The love that we owe is unto God, but God will have the duty diſcharged to his image our neighbour, to his members our brethren; ſpecially where this duty may give moſt evident token of love: as when wee provide for the poore which can make no recompence, or pray for our enemies which hate us. Indeed thou loſeſt nothing by giving to the poore, for it is put on his ſcore to whom thou oweſt thy ſelfe, it is repaied by him, who hath given himſelfe for thy redemption, and will give himſelfe unto thee for thine eternall ſalvation. Thou findeſt no cauſe to love thine enemy, nei-

ther did God to love thee. God loved thee without an example; but hath left it to thee for thy imitation; for ſo well hee loves thee, that he would have thee like himſelfe. Hee loved thee freely for himſelfe, thou muſt love freely too, but for his ſake, is not this cauſe enough? God bids thee; ſhall the countenance of an enemy diſmay thee? this is the way (pointed out by God and bleſſed by him) to make thy foe thy friend: fall it out otherwiſe, he is thy friend more than his owne, he gives place to thee in goodnes, ſtrive not thou with him, who ſhall be worſt. After love hath diſpatcht her duties abroad, ſhe returneth home, and doth privately converſe with God, and this is an entring into the chamber of her well beloved. Let mee dye if the wealth of the covetous, or the ho-

nours

nors of the ambitious, or the delicates of the voluptuous, be to be envyed, and not rather contemned in reſpect of this, if thou know it, thou deſireſt nothing elſe, if not, any thing.

Meditation 3.

Of Paſſions.

PAſſions are originall, and naturall, they are bred with us, they are a part of us, wee can no more leave to be without them, then to be men, yet are they the baſer part of the minde, for their familiarity with the ſenſes, and hence the Philoſophers thought did ariſe their diſorder, but if the minde it ſelfe be infected, how can theſe be cleane? And if the eye be darkneſſe, what light can there be

in the members? yet vertue is the government of Paſſions, and all vertues whereby man doth imitate Gods holineſſe or righteouſneſſe, are but well governed Paſſions. Mans vertue is in the middeſt of much weakeneſſe, and therefore his victory the more commendable. And of all victories it is the beſt, when one overcomes himſelfe. Many have been invincible abroad, which have beene overcome by their owne weakeneſſe at home. I feare nothing ſo much as treaſon within. I ſpeake it without pride, through the gift of God I know more than many, (though I know nothing as I ſhould) and yet practiſe but little according to my knowledge. I know what piety, what common duty doth require, yet ſtand I unreſolved or ſlow. I have much bettered my judgement by

by hearing, but am a very Infant in performing what I have heard. I am more ſound alone, than in company; more upright for ſtrangers, than in my owne or friends cauſe. I am not ſo bad in intent, as in event. What I do not prevent, I would gladly amend. I thought not on that which after makes mee wonder how I could forget; all this I impute to paſſion. Religion ſanctifies paſſion by oppoſing a fit object; as, love as much as you liſt, ſo you love God; hate as much as you liſt ſo you hate ſinne; rejoyce alwayes, but rejoyce in goodneſſe; be ſorry too, but let it be the ſorrow of repentance. Wee may bee full of hope, but as pilgrimes bound for heaven. Wee ought to feare, ſo that it be to offend God. Will we envie? it muſt bee that others goe not beyond us in well-doing: will we be jealous?

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it muſt bee that nothing deſile our conſcience. Wee have wherein to truſt if it be in Gods grace; and wherein to diſtruſt if it bee in our owne nature. Likewiſe there is a holy confidence, a holy deſpaire; the one claimes Chriſts merits, the other denies her owne. That revenge alſo is juſt, whereby wee debarre our ſelves of the occaſions which led us into ſinne: Yea paſſions here doe paſſe into another nature, as anger, into zeale for Gods glory; love into charity; ſorrow into repentance; pity into almeſdeeds; hope into patience; feare into watching and prayer; mirth into thankſgiving; confidence into perſeverance. The inconſtancy of the wind makes the Pilot at ſea watchfull, and the diſorder of our affections ought to make us adviſed. As is a horſe without a bit, ſo are our affections

without

without understanding; let reason rule the reines, lest thou bee overthrowne. Hast thou to deale with a cunning man which is like to overtake thee? or a great man which will be too hard for thee? or a hasty man which will offer to hurt thee? or with a lewd man which may corrupt thee? looke well about thee; there is more danger from thy owne passions, then from any, or all these. It is good to doe nothing in passion, give time to reason, and use the helpe of prayer, and thou shalt anon espy the depth of some temptation, which lies commonly hid under an ordinary passion. There are tentations of all sorts, and for all sorts of passions; for merry men, unlawfull pleasures; for sad men, uncomfortable despaires; for presumptuous, crying sinnes; for angry men, quarrels

and brawles. Looke to thy paſſions, and thou maiſt prevent many, though not all temptations.

Meditation 4.

Of Providence.

THou art not able to change the courſe of nature, it is only in the power of God who made it. The ſecond cauſe is tied to the firſt, but the firſt worketh freely either with it, or without it. Hath God taken order for one part of his worke and not for all? Thou haſt a free will, not to be conſtrained: true, yet is this thy will ſubject to the higheſt and firſt will, which moving all our willes, is moved of none. Thou muſt needs follow it, that will not follow thee. God made mee in the firſt man as in

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my cauſe, and hee made the firſt man for himſelfe. Wherefore the fall of man did not croſſe his ſupreme counſell, for then ſhould not that have beene, which notwithſtanding he did moſt willingly and juſtly ſuffer. Is it Gods will then that all men ſhould be concluded under ſinne, that hee might have mercy on whom hee would, and whom hee would he might juſtly forſake? ſo it followes. Yet is his will no cauſe of ſinne, but a rule of all righteouſneſſe; ſo ought I to beleeve. Well, doth God looke on mee in the face of his well beloved? do I beleeve the Chriſtian Faith? doe I deſire to doe all Chriſtian duties? ſtrive I againſt mine owne corruptions? this is Gods ſpeciall favour unto mee, it is his worke in mee for which I am bound to bee thankfull unto him, in which I

am to take comfort, this is my duty to follow his calling, to be obedient to his government, herein ſtandeth my eternall happineſſe: or bee it that I doe not beleeve or love God, or live in his feare, yet is not this in my power to amend, or have I any juſt cauſe of excuſe? examine not Gods decrees by thine owne reaſon, or thoſe lawes of juſtice which wee are bound to obſerve, feare his Majeſty, humble thy ſelfe before his preſence, ſeeke his mercy, receive not grace in vaine; there is no way to heaven but a holy life; and hee that purpoſeth thou ſhouldeſt be ſaved: doth call thee to faith and repentance. If thou avoid the meanes to attaine unto either, thou barreſt thy ſelfe out, and art an enemy to thine owne Soule; if thou come unto God, he will not reject thee; wherefore

aske:

aske for grace that thou maiſt come; without which thou ſhalt never come: and it is neceſſary for thee to know this, leſt thou ſhouldeſt truſt to nature, and not ſeeke grace; or deſpaire, when thou ſeeſt thou canſt not attaine unto it by thine owne ſtrength: Aske not how he is mercifull, which ſaveth a few and condemneth many; how he is juſt, which by his will ſo bringeth it about, that wee are all in the cauſe of damnation, but beleeve it; aske not why God doth not change the wills of wicked men, with whom, and in whom hee doth not ceaſe to worke: but reverence his decree, whoſe judgments are juſt, though unknowne. But thou art much troubled and vexed, to heare this doctrine and ſo are many others; this trouble, this vexation (if thou belong to God) ſhall turne to thy good;

good; for it ſhall ſo humble and caſt thee downe, that thou ſhalt wholly depend on God, and give Him his glory; but if thou belong not to him, thou ſhalt complaine, aud murmure more and more, and be nothing the better, nothing the neare, for God will not ceaſe to be God, though wee beleeve not; nor good, though we be wicked: But who will care to beleeve? to amend his life? to ſtrive againſt ſinne, if it be not in us; if without us God have diſpoſed of us? ſurely none of himſelfe can or will; they only doe, whom God doth vouchſafe to enable. The word of God which is his revealed and conditionall will, is unto ſome the ſavor of life unto life, and unto others the ſavor of death unto death; to none the ſavor of life, but to thoſe that beleeve, to none the ſavor of death but to thoſe that

that beleeve not; he will have all men to be ſaved, if they will them ſelves, and hee forſakes none but they that forſake him: theſe things are for us to marke, and obſerve; yet to beleeve, or not to beleeve, to will ſalvation, or to will it not, doe depend upon a higher will, whoſe law is unknowne to us: wee muſt live by that which is revealed, and adore that which is hidden from us, ſo ſhall wee neither neglect our duty, nor deprive God of his glory and majeſty.

Meditation 5.

Of Patience.

THere is none which can bee merry, none rich, none well friended, none in authority, none have

have ever good ſucceſſe more ſafely then a Chriſtian: for in all theſe he uſeth a good conſcience, yet becauſe ſuch a ſtreame of proſperity is dangerous to mans frailty, hee is not to looke for his heaven here, but elſewhere; becauſe he is now in triall, not in triumph, a pilgrim, and not at home, that many troubles muſt bee ſuffered, either to purge him of vice, or for his better exerciſe of vertue: and both to Gods glory. I ſee nothing more neceſſary for him then Patience, a vertue which doth harden him to follow Chriſt willingly, and quickly, in bearing the Croſſe; and if wee conſider our Saviours life, wee may obſerve that he uſed no one vertue more then Patience, not only in his Paſſion, but in the whole courſe of his life, which as it were nothing but a Paſſion throughout;

ſo

ſo was it but an exerciſe of his continuall patience: wee muſt ſuffer many things of our adverſaries, which will oppoſe themſelves to our vocation; it is not in our power to put them by; and take them quietly wee cannot, without patience. Yea which is worſt of all, God will ſeeme ſometimes to be againſt us, and taking from us inward conſolation, will leave us to ſorrow and ſadneſſe of ſpirit, as if we were forſaken; theſe things befell unto our Lord, who uſed Patience as the beſt remedy, teaching us not only to beare his Croſſe, but how to beare it alſo, till it ſhall pleaſe God to returne againe unto us with comfort. Wee muſt have patience to beare great tentations, as well as ſmall, and to beare them as long as it pleaſeth God, whether great or ſmall, great troubles will need great Patience:

and

and ſmall troubles enduring long no ſmall Patience. Now the Chriſtian is to be exerciſed grievouſly, continually, becauſe God meanes to make him partaker of a great victory, a great reward. Faith is neceſſary for our entrance into the Church, hope to nouriſh faith, and love is the fruit of faith, and briefe of all the Commandements; ſee here the ſumme of divinity. But without Patience wee cannot abide in the Church, for being once offended, wee ſhall loſe them except we have Patience. Why is it ſaid, Woe bee to him that hath loſt patience? belike it is the laſt loſſe. If a Maſter of a Ship loſe his Anchor, or Mainemaſt, or a Saile, thoſe are great loſſes, yet to be repaired: but if it be ſaid once he hath loſt his Ship, wee know hee hath loſt all, and perhaps himſelfe too: ſo if wee loſe

loſe a time of Prayer, or the exerciſe of reading and meditation, an occaſion of doing good, if wee ſtagger in faith, theſe are heavy loſſes indeed, yet particular and recoverable; but if it be ſaid wee have loſt Patience, what meanes it but that wee have loſt all, and our ſelves too? Wherefore well is it ſaid, Woe be unto him that hath loſt Patience. Patience is as it were the ſecond concoction of all vertues; and drawes from them whatſoever is for the ſtrength and nouriſhment of a Chriſtian life: if this be weake in working, our ſtrength is ſmall. From faith Patience drawes confidence, from Hope perſeverance, from Love cheerfulneſſe. They which are Saints in Heaven, are ſaid to have Palmes in their hands, a reſemblance of Patience, by which they are victorious. Patience

tience is a remedy in thoſe cauſes which nothing elſe can remedy. Shew thy faith to the perſecutor, he will not ſuffer thee to enjoy it, except thou wilt loſe liberty, goods, friends and life, what will become now of thy faith except thou have Patience? ſhew thy charity to thine enemy, hee will deſpiſe it, hee will wrong thee ſtill more and more, what then will become of thy charity if thou have not Patience? let it bee knowne that thou art an upright man, the Devill will tempt thee outwardly and inwardly, and what will become of thy uprightneſſe if thou have not Patience? thou prayeſt, and God heareth not, thou askeſt, & he giveth not, thou wouldeſt have plenty, and behold want; thou wouldeſt have health and ſtrength, and behold weakneſſe; thou wouldeſt have

peace

peace and behold warre; thou wouldeſt have credit, and behold ſlander; thou wouldeſt be ſome, and art no body, and what will become of thy prayers if thou have not Patience ?To keepe Patience wee muſt be beholding to experience. Try once how much profit Patience doth bring thee, and thou ſhalt never bee weary of it, thou ſhalt finde ſuccour, feele comfort unexpected: obſerve Gods providence, & forget not his love; this will direct to the end where wee ſhall finde contentment, when nothing ſhall make us more happy then that wee have ſuffered with Patience; they that will not bee patient ſhall ſuffer more then wee, but wee only which are patient, ſhall receive the reward of ſuffering.

Meditation 6.

Of Liberty.

VVEe love to take liberty, and fare all the worſe; becauſe our choice is of ſuch as is agreeable to a nature ſick and not ſound. God is neceſſarily good, and yet doth good moſt freely; man (ſince his fall) is neceſſarily evill, and doth evill moſt freely; but alas, what a freedome is this ſo to bee overlookt by ſinne, that we cannot doe any thing to pleaſe God, or to eaſe our ſelves! Chriſt by his Goſpell calleth us to a Liberty, not of the fleſh, to live according to the luſts thereof; not an outward liberty, to diſcharge us from duties fit for our callings, or preſcribed by lawes not repugnant to the word of God; but to

a Liberty of the ſpirit: firſt, from the curſe of the Morall Law, by which we are ſubject to the wrath of God. And this Liberty comes from the free remiſſion of our ſinnes in his bloud who is become our Saviour, ſo that all the evills which befall us in this life even unto death it ſelfe, turne unto our good, and are ſent not from an angry Judge, but from a mercifull Father; as it is ſaid, Wee are afflicted, but not convicted; we doubt, but wee deſpaire not; wee are perſecuted, but not forſaken; wee are caſt downe, but wee periſh not. Secondly, from the tyranny of ſinne, ſo that we doe not only begin to ſtrive, but doe alſo prevaile againſt it more and more, and ſhall at laſt utterly overcome it, even to the breaking of the Serpents head. Thirdly, from obſervation of ceremonies, and judicialls of *Moſes*,

as touch not, taſt not, handle not, and wee may freely uſe the creatures of God with ſobriety and thankſgiving, which are given for meat, drink and apparell, and uſe likewiſe or not uſe all things indifferent according to charity. Fourthly, from all Lawes and conſtitutions of men, that they binde not the conſcience as matters of ſalvation, though for outward order and policy wee are in cõſcience bound to obſerve them, if they bee not contrary to Gods word, but agreeable to the generall rules thereof: this is true Liberty, agreeable to the ſtate of our firſt Creation, and abounding more in grace if wee ſeeke for it, for the which wee are continually to praiſe God the author thereof. It is great Liberty to be out of bondage, but it a greater to be the freeman of Chriſt; it is

a great

a great Liberty to be taken out of the hands of a Tyrant, but a greater to be reſcued out of the power of ſinne and Satan; it is a great Liberty which Nobility doth challenge, but a greater which a good conſcience. What a Liberty is it to doe that which is good? to ſpeake that which is wholeſome, and for edification? to wrong no man? not to wrong himſelfe? to live without ſhame? and to die without feare? Let us deteſt the youths Liberty, to have no Tutor, the Theeſes to eſcape the halter, the fooles to ſcoffe at his Brother, the blaſphemers to ſweare, the wantons to bee unſeene, the drunkards to pledge healths and uſe much quaffing, the malecontents to have no ſtate, the unthrifts to turn himſelfe out of houſe and home.

Meditation 7.

Humane frailty.

O Father *Adam*, thy Children are all too much like thee! would I were a Pillar of Marble in the Houſe of my God, that no tentation might ſhake mee, no ſinne diſplace mee; or as the two Pillars of *Solomons* Temple, *Jatui* and *Boa*, that there might be certainty in my reſolution, and conſtancy in my courſes. A Chriſtian is a man, but I am more a man then a Chriſtian, nay rather a child, then a man. I weep for vanities and toies, and caſt behind mee the Law of God more worth then the Gold of *Ophir*. I would ſtand, but I fall downe flat. I would be better, but prove worſe. I would ſinne no more, I did not

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to my knowledge ſinne ſo much before. Oh hell in this world, to hate ſinne, yet to entertaine it, to beare the ſhame, the ſorrow, the ſmart, of ſinne, and yet to ſhake hands withit! Where ſhall I have teares enongh to bewaile my ſinnes? my heart is broken with ſighing, and my braines dried up with weeping. Would to God my head were a fountaine of teares, and mine eyes rivers of waters, to bewaile the deſolation that ſinne hath wrought within mee. If I bee not able to match ſinne in his ſtrength, why give I it time, and not rather kill it while it is young? If jealous thoughts and occaſions not cut off doe increaſe his band, why doe I ſuffer him to muſter Souldiers in mine owne dominions? Oh that wee could renew our fight, when wee are put to flight (as I have read of

ſome people) and take our purſuers at a diſadvantage; but when wee begin once to flie, nothing can ſtay us, and though no enemy follow, wee run our ſelves out of breath. The comforts wee might lawfully uſe are ten thouſand times more, then the pleaſures wee unlawfully ſteale; the devotion which Gods law asketh, is free, noble, full of reward; the tax which ſinne impoſeth, baſe, ſlaviſh, beggerly: yet how proud are wee in ſuch poverty? if wee compare our ſelves, then are wee farre more circumſpect, more holy then others; if any duty required of us, then (preſuming of our owne ſtrength) wee follow Chriſt to the death, and a little after deny him. *Peter* did once, I would wee did not often for leſſe cauſe. How neceſſary for us, then is humility and prayer? humility, to value our

ſelves

ſelves as wee are, (and wee cannot indeed thinke worſe of our ſelves then wee are, wandring, weake, unconſtant, wilfull, wicked) and prayer, that wee may find in God what wee want in our ſelves: for ſurely he would never have ſent his ſonne amongſt us, had he not had care to redreſſe our miſeries; and to aske of the Father in the name of the Sonne, is the way to bee gratious in obtaining our ſuits; Let not thy unworthineſſe diſcourage thee to come unto God: nor let his mercy make thee forget thy vileneſſe, that keeping a hard hand on thy corruptions, thou maiſt the better prevaile with God as *Jacob* did.

Meditation 8.

Of Vocations.

COme you into one of their ſhops whoſe wits are ſaid to dwell in their fingers, and you ſhall wonder to ſee the ſtore and variety of tooles, and how it may be poſſible, that one hand ſhould uſe them all, and yet not one but hath his uſe; likewiſe look you into the ſtate of ſome greater ſociety, and you ſhall ſee a world of men, & yet not one idle, becauſe every man is appointed by the gifts naturall or above nature, and called out as it were to apply himſelfe unto that kind of life for which he is moſt fit. It is ſtrange, that amongſt ſo many ſundry vocations, as there are, ſome high, ſome low, poore, rich, noble, baſe,

baſe, of body, of mind, there is notwithſtanding ſuch an excellent harmony of them all, that as wee ſay of the bodily members, that they ſerve both for one anothers turne, and for the good of the whole body: ſo it may be ſaid of theſe. And as the taking away or adding of a mẽber overthrows the ſhape of the body: ſo is it in this caſe to a State, if neceſſary Vocations bee wanting, or unneceſſary uſed. All men are not fit for all Vocations, and therefore as there are diverſe abilities in men, ſo are there diverſe Vocations about which they ſhould bee imployed. Neither is it enough, that all Vocations bee in uſe, but by ſuch for whom they are moſt fit. There is one moſt neceſſary, generall and honourable Vocation, and is the rule of all others, which calleth us out of the world

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to profeſſe Chriſtian Religion, and after which wee are called Chriſtians. God grant wee may well conſider what this calling requireth of us, and wee ſhall be the more forward in the duties of other callings, for there are alſo callings ſpeciall, and theſe muſt not only be lawfull in themſelves, but lawfully uſed. We ſhould become our callings, but wee think it enough if our callings become us; whereby there fals out ſo great ods betweene both, that all men ſee how unfit wee are for them, and they for us. Some are not called but doe call themſelves, and that is, not for love of the calling, but ſome circumſtance, as credit or gaine, and theſe doe as little good in a calling as any. If a man paſſe by a dignity or title, and put himſelfe into a place where he may doe more good,

this man no doubt loves his calling, and may well bee commended for his modeſty.

In a calling there is both an office, and a maintenance; and I wonder that in thoſe callings which are the weightieſt, the office is oft times divided from the maintenance, and men reckon not much of it, whereas in other callings of leſſe importance they muſt goe together, and if there be a faulty neglect, men ſooner complaine.

If one be appointed a Judge, he muſt ſit himſelfe in Court to heare Cauſes, elſe hath he not his allowance; if a Counſeller, he muſt bee preſent at the Barre to plead for his Client, or elſe he hath no Fee.

If Captaine of a Caſtle, hee muſt abide the aſſault, elſe he loſeth his penſion.

If

If I appoint one to keep my Sheep, and he look not unto them, I withdraw his wages; yet one hath the Benefice, and another hath the cure, there is a Parſon but no Preacher, there is neither Parſon nor Preacher, but there are their Proctors.

There bee two vertues which helpe a Calling, and there be two vices which pull it downe. It is an excellent rule when wee have uſed our meanes, ſo to feare God, as wee depend on his bleſſing; this breeds comfort and cheerfulneſſe: againe, to uſe patience though the ſucceſſe be otherwiſe, then wee look for; this will rid us of vexation. How ill doe they provide for their buſineſſe, which deale falſly; a thing which God will not bleſſe? or envy others ſo farre, that they loſe their owne content; whereas God hath ordained all

all callings to depend ſo on one another, that there is no gift or benefit wch a man hath, but muſt turne to the good of his Neighbour; and inſtead of envying his proſperity, wee would rejoyce at it, were our eye ſingle.

If one were to bee choſen for a calling, among a thouſand who might ſeeme more fit then a buſybody, for his readineſſe, to meddle where no man deſires him; for his diligence, to do more then ever he hath thankes for; for his ability, no matter ſeemes too hard for him? and yet in truth he is the only unfit man of all others, in his talk he is ever from the matter, and in his dealings knows better how to begin then end, he is taken up with every tale hee heares, and he hath buſineſſe with every man he meets; his memory is as weak as his apprehenſion is quick,

quick, and though in duty he will take much on him, yet in curteſy you are to leave him at his liberty, and to looke for nothing from him till all his buſineſſe be ended, and that will never bee: fit a calling for this man, and fit a faſhion for this age.

But to returne to our purpoſe, and deſcend more lower into thoſe callings amongſt which ſome are publique, others private. The publique callings are appointed for the order and ſafety of the private; and the private uſed for the maintenance of the publique. The publique hath more honour, but leſſe quietneſſe; more wealth, but leſſe content: the private hath more contempt, but leſſe envy; more wrong, but leſſe danger. Of all publique functions none are more worthy then thoſe which pertaine to the Church,

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(the Civill I deny not are as neceſſary:)conſider their ſubject and end, they deale with the Soules of men to bring them to Heaven: in this the Church is ſubject to none but Chriſt, though in reſpect of the perſons that uſe them, ſhee is ſubject to the Magiſtrate, as the Magiſtrate in that he is a Chriſtian is ſubject to the Church. The world will ſay that the Common-wealth is before the Church, and that there may be a Civill ſtate though no Church; but the Church cannot be without a Civill ſtate. But what ſaith Chriſt, *Seeke the Kingdome of God firſt*, he would have us build a Church before wee erect a State, and our firſt Parents *Adam* and *Eve* were a Church before there was a Common-wealth; and as a Church had the bleſſing from God to erect a Common-wealth, ſaying unto

unto them, Increaſe and multiply; but then when the Common-wealth was increaſed, the Church was neglected: and ſo is it ever. But I would not have the Church *Guelphes*, and the Common-wealth *Gibellines*: Oh what an harmoniall hierarchy is it, when the Church and Common-wealth doe not only dwell and converſe together, but ſo incorporate themſelves one into another, that they may ſeeme but one body, yet without confuſion of their Vocations, and rights!

Therefore doe I diſlike the monaſticall life, which hath beene ſo much in requeſt as the next way to Heaven: all that they could ſay was that they prayed for others; which is the common returne of all idle rogues and wandring beggers; but whereas others did both pray and labour for them, they with-

withdrew themſelves from all converſing with men in any calling; they noted the Prieſts which had cures with an odious epithete, calling them Seculars, and yet in wealth and eaſe they themſelves were farre beyond, in paine behind them. Solitarines for a time, to better thoſe callings, that Schollers may returne to converſe among men, with the greater profit, is that which our Saviour uſed, and is to be commended.

Meditation 9.

Of Gods long ſuffering.

WEe find fearefull examples of Gods anger againſt ſinne, as *Adam* caſt out of Paradiſe, *Cain* baniſhed from the Lords preſence, the old world drowned

drowned in the Flood, *Sodome* and the Cities adjoyning burnt with fire from Heaven, *Pharoah* and his Hoſt choaked up in the Red Sea, *Corah* and his companions ſwallowed up of the Earth, ſeven Nations put to the Sword by the *Iſraelites*, the twelve Tribes diſperſed, the painfull death of our Lord the ſonne of God, ſuffering for the ſinne of man; yet is God very patient towards ſinners, firſt in that he calleth all men to repentance by the ſound of his word, or the inward touch of their owne conſciences; ſecondly, becauſe it is long before hee doth puniſh offenders, as the old world had a hundred yeares, the 7 Nations foure hundred; thirdly, becauſe he doth give warning before the ſtroake fall, by threatnings, ſignes and wonders; and if men repent and call for mercy, he for-

forgiveth, and holds his hand as it fell out to *Niniveh*. Fourthly, when he doth puniſh he remembreth mercy, and though he make ſome an example, yet ſaveth he his people which deſerved all to periſh: this fell out to *Adam*, and oft times to the *Iſraelites*, notwithſtanding that they more then once provoked him. Laſtly, there are many whom he never puniſhſheth in this life, though they daily offend him, but doth beſtow upon them both peace and plenty, filling their hearts with joy and gladneſſe; whence it commeth to paſſe that many dare vaunt there is no God, promiſing unto themſelves liberty of doing what they liſt, grow moſt looſe and licentious, and draw unto themſelves whole multitudes of ſuch as they have corrupted: ſuch a one was *Nimrod* after the floud,

a Captaine of them which laid the foundation of that never to be finiſhed tower.

But this is a wicked abuſe of the divine patience, which is as it were an Arke, wherby the Church is ſaved, from the overflowings of ungodlineſſe. The godly underſtanding well the Lords patience, obſerve thereby how willing he is that all men ſhould repent and bee ſaved: for being all as wee are borne in ſinne, and ſo fraile ever after, that the beſt doth oft offend, what hope were there of avoiding his diſpleaſure, if he ſhould not grant time to imbrace thoſe meanes, whereby wee might bee again reconciled to him? And this he doth not once or twice, but often, as our Saviour proteſted, How oft would I have gathered you? and behold great patience, wherfore from him which would not

not have us tye our ſelves to ſeven times, but doth inlarge it to ſeventy times ſeven times, look for the like or greater meaſure from the length of his owne patience. And this is ſo farre from breeding any dulneſſe in Gods Children, as though this patience were a ſlackneſſe of the Lord in favour of ſinne, or a weakneſſe as unable preſently to puniſh what he doth not favour, that knowing his purpoſe therein, they are the more earneſtly inforced ſpeedily to returne unto the Lord, and that with great ſorrow, having offended him, which is ſo patient in forbearing of them. And they labour ſo much the more diligently to redeeme what by negligence hath beene omitted often with thankfulneſſe, calling to mind this ſingular benefit, and ſtirre up others to bee partakers thereof.

And

and unto all thoſe is Gods patience a ſanctuary, from his wrath. For them only ſhall it be turned into fury, which have deſpiſed it. If God be ſo patient, and beare with us, ſhould wee be impatient and not beare with one another? God dealt patiently with him which afterwards tooke his brother by the throat. There is nothing which more diſpleaſeth the Lord, nothing wherein he deſireth rather to bee imitated, in ſo much as he barreth him from all acceſſe which wanteth patience. Prayer is of ſuch force with God that it winneth any thing from him, yet if thou be impatient, it availeth nothing, for thou askeſt a good turne of God, and beareſt no good mind to thy brother, & therfore he will not heare thee. Wilt thou have God patient? abuſe not thy brother as one wanting

ting patience. God who doth all things patiently, doth all things wiſely; for patience is quiet and patience takes leaſure, ſo that in him followes not this after-wit, I had not wiſt it. Impatient men are angry and haſty, which two things pervert counſell. Oh vaine man, thou knoweſt how patiently the Lord hath dealt with thee, and how impatient thou haſt beene thy ſelfe for ſmall matters, doſt thou not wonder at both? how the Lord could beare with thee ſo long, or thou thy ſelfe ſo little for Gods ſake? The Lord would not have thee periſh, here is thy good intended: doe thou that which may turne to thy brothers good, that God may be glorified in thy patience. This made *Jacob* ſay unto his brother *Eſau*, I have ſeene thy face as if I had ſeene the face of God, and in-

deed a patient man is no other then the very Image of God amongſt men.

Meditation 10.

Of Faith and Workes.

AS the Sunne riſeth in the Eaſt and ſetteth in the Weſt, ſo ¡Religion riſeth in Faith and ſetteth in obedience of Workes: and as there cannot bee an Eaſt, but there muſt be alſo a Weſt, ſo is there no ſaving Faith without the obedience of Faith: and as the Morning and Evening make one Day, ſo Faith and obedience the life of a Chriſtian. I have read of a people which wanting a King did agree on this kind of election, they would goe all together into a broad Field, neare

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the Towne, and he that could eſpie the riſing of the Sunne firſt, ſhould bee taken as the worthieſt man; ſo after midnight they went out, to obſerve the riſing of the Sunne, and the whole multitude had their Eyes fixed on the Eaſt, one only amongſt them, wiſer then the reſt, looked toward the Weſt, at whom they all marvelled much; but when the day began to dawne, and all others were intentive Eaſtward, to take notice of the Sunnes riſing, this fellow which ſtood Weſtward, before they wiſt of it, ſhewed them the riſing of the Sunne, in the tops of the Houſes and Towers of the City: It is a common conceit of them, which take notice of Religion in any, to looke towards his Faith and profeſſion, becauſe indeed Religion doth begin, and as it were riſe there; but they

which are wiſe will look towards obedience and Workes, becauſe Religion doth firſt appeare there; it may bee hid in Faith, and thou canſt not certainly diſcerne it, for there is ods betweene Faith and profeſſion; but if his Workes bee good and godly, thou maiſt boldly preſume, that the Sunne of righteouſneſſe is riſen on him, and hath with his beames of Religion enlightned him: wherefore *James* ſaith, Pure religion and undefiled before God, and the father, is this, to viſit the fatherleſſe and widowes in their adverſities, and to keep himſelfe unſpotted of the world: marke how he judgeth of Religion, not by Faith, but obedience; and yet there is no Religion pure, but by Faith; becauſe Faith is alſo to be tried by obedience, in the ſight of men, as obedience by Faith before God;

God; And Chriſt uſeth the ſame direction, Hereby ſhall all men know you are my Diſciples, if yee love one another; and love as yee know containeth all duties of the Law; and hence is Chriſts anſwer in the Goſpell, to ſuch as ſhall ſay at the day of judgment, Have not wee taught, and preached, and done great Workes in thy name? Depart from me, I know you not, all yee workers of iniquity: Chriſt looked not on their profeſſion, but practice. There is a knowledge of the truth, and that wee have from Faith, beleeving in the Death, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion of Chriſt; and there is an experience of the truth, when the vertue of theſe things beleeved, doth worke in our lives, as when by the power of Chriſts Death, wee die unto ſinne; and by the power of his Reſurrection,

wee ariſe unto newneſſe of life; and by the power of his Aſcenſion are heavenly minded. When wee are come to knowledge, wee paſſe on to truſt, and confidence, by applying to our ſelves the promiſes of the Goſpell; ſo when wee are come to this truſt, wee muſt paſſe on to experience, and triall in our lives, by imitating thoſe things in our ſelves which Chriſt hath done for us; this is that which Saint *Paul* ſaith, wee all behold as in a mirrour the glory of the Lord, with open face, and are changed into the ſame Image: from glory to glory: as by the ſpirit of God, God ſheweth his face open to us in the Goſpell, wee behold it by Faith, wee are changed into the ſame by ſpeciall truſt and confidence, that the things there promiſed, belong unto us, as remiſſion of ſinnes, the righte-

righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, freedome from death, and the gift of eternall life; and wee paſſe from glory to glory, by the experience ſpoken of, when the vertue of the things wee beleeve, doth worke in our lives, and make us holy, as he is holy; and wee have both righteouſneſſe inherent and imputed; and for this cauſe, *Paul* ſpeaking of the ſame matter to the *Philippians*, doth not count himſelfe perfect, or to have as yet attained the full end of his calling, for though he had begun in the firſt degree to beleeve, and gone forward to the ſecond for application, yet had he much to doe in the laſt, as long as it ſhould pleaſe God to lend him life. But you will ſay, what doth the vertue of Chriſts Paſſion, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion belong to us? As the ſap of the ſtock belongs to the graft, ſo wee being

grafted into Christ by a lively Faith, that vertue of his, whereby hee overcame death, rose againe and ascended, must needs grow up in us, to bring forth like fruits; and to signify this union, he in other places is called the head, and the faithfull members of the same body; a vine, and the faithfull branches of the vine; and how this union is made betweene Christ and the faithfull, the Sacrament of Christs blessed body and bloud, doth not only represent, but that it is done also, as often as the faithfull doe rightly receive the same, it doth testify; and therefore there is not bare bread, or a signe only, but the body and bloud of Christ really, yet not grosly, as the Papists imagine, but after a heavenly manner to the Soule, to Faith; neither is it necessary for this union, and the benefit

beneſit thereof, that it ſhould be locall, ſo as Chriſts body muſt enter into ours, but when Faith doth embrace Chriſt, crucified for us, that the Spirit, whoſe power is not tied to diſtance of places, make the faithfull man partaker of thoſe gifts and graces of his redemption, which can be no otherwiſe derived unto him, but from the humane nature of Chriſt which ſuffered, and as hee is a member of Chriſt.

Meditation 11.

Of Merit.

THere is a great queſtion betweene the Papiſts and us, what workes pleaſe God beſt, either ſuch as are done to Merit, or of duty: they ſay workes done of

duty have leſſe zeale; but belike they ſeparate duty from love: wee ſay, workes done to Merit ſavor more of pride, and cannot pleaſe God of themſelves, becauſe they want duty: and if wee ſhould joine with them in an iſſue about zeale, it might bee proved that their zeale for the glory of God is not ſo great, which worke to Merit as the others. Saint *Paul*, as appeareth in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, wrought not to Merit, but of duty and love: he which worketh to Merit, muſt remember what is paſt, and examine all his workes from the beginning to the end, whether they be worthy that reward which he meanes to challenge; but Saint *Paul* working of duty, forgot what was paſt as though he had done nothing, and his mind was only on that which he might be able to do farther.

ther as long as God would give him life, according to that of our Saviour, When yee have done all that you can, ſay, you are unprofitable ſervants: as if he ſhould ſay, thinke ſo meanly of what you have done, that you count it your duty to doe much more as long as you live, even as much as you can, and yet ſhall you be unprofitable ſervants, both in reſpect of the grace uſed, and not turned to the beſt advantage, and in reſpect of the glory to bee received, for which, you can give no worthy recompence, ſaving that it is the fathers will for my ſake to give it to you, & what he hath promiſed, he will in juſtice performe: Belike Chriſt when he ſpake ſo much of duty, meant to take zeale from workes nothing at all; but to adde the more love and willingneſſe, which is the cauſe of zeale,

to

to the baſe and ſlaviſh mind, a benefit paſt is of no force, whereas the free and gentle heart is diſpoſed towards a good turne received; but becauſe both they and wee agree thus farre, that good workes are neceſſary, let us rather buſy our ſelves about doing well, then diſputing wittily. God grant that I may remember I am a Chriſtian; if this bind me not to doe good, nothing will; if I doe unfeignedly what I can, God will bee merciſull where I faile, and Chriſt will rather want merits, then I ſhall want reward.

Meditation 12.

Paſtorall cure.

THey which know what belongs to a flock, are not ignorant

norant of the care of a Shepheard, or the neceſſities of Sheep; neither is it an unworthy conſideration, for out of Shepheards have been taken Kings, and Kings in time paſt have not refuſed to be Shepheards, and they which at this day doe rule in the State, have this as no meane title of their authority, to be ſtiled Shepheards of the people; yea God himſelfe doth vouchſafe to expreſſe the Government which he taketh over his people, under the title of Shepheard; and *Chriſt Jeſus* our Lord who died for mankind, is called the great Shepheard of our Soules. And indeed the charge over a flock or people are much like; wee in *England*, have a great deſire to deale on Sheep; and it is one of the chiefeſt commodities in the Countrey; they are ſo profitable, their Wool

is

is in great requeſt at home, and with ſtrangers, their bodies are good for meat or medicine, yea their very excrement have their uſe; they are gentle of nature, not dangerous to be handled as other beaſts which are armed to defend or offend, howbeit in this doth not the reſemblance hold ſo well; but if you reſpect the weakneſſe and neceſſities of Sheep, it may notably expreſſe the care, the faithfullneſſe, the diligence which God uſeth, in governing his people, God is deſirous to rule his ſervants as a flock of Sheep, not for any great profit he can make of them, neither is it intended of him which needs it not, or lookt for there where it cannot be had, for though their bodies were of excellent imployment by creation, yet what are they of themſelves ſince *Adams* Fall, but cages

of uncleane Birds, neſts of ſinne, grievouſly tainted with a ſickneſſe that in Sheep makes carcaſſe and Wool unprofitable? It is alone then for our profit, that hee will have us under government, the Laws which he makes, are not for his owne good, which is infinite goodneſſe in himſelfe; but for ours: neither the courſes which wee undertake under his direction for his happineſſe, who is eternall happineſſe himſelfe, but for ours. True it is, that he addeth unto his Law authority, to make us the rather yeeld unto that, which is for our benefit, and from his authority, doth proceed reward or puniſhment, that wee may know hee commandeth not in vaine. Moreover the government of men (as they beſt know, which know State matters) is the men themſelves, being

being ſo variable, full of diſcontent and malice, above all Creatures, if wee will count them tame, becauſe of reaſon wee ſhall find them wild and ſavage by evill courſe and cuſtome of life; notwithſtanding, God doth make them ſo his owne, whom he rules as his flock, that none ſhall be able to pull them out of his hands, he will not loſe one of the leaſt of them, he leaveth the ninety and nine, to ſeek out the wandring and loſt Sheep, and when he hath found him, layeth him on his ſhoulders with joy, and returning home, maketh merry with his Neighbours for the Sheep that was loſt, but is found; he knoweth his Sheep, and is known of them, he will lay downe his life for his Sheep, and will not forſake them; he bringeth them into the ſweet paſtures of his holy

ly Word, and refreſheth them with the coole Waters of his Spirit, he hath a rod and a ſtaffe, the rod keeps in his Sheep, and the ſtaffe keeps out the Wolfe: by all which it commeth to paſſe, that no flock is in ſuch ſtate as his, they have a comely order in their going forth, a provident proviſion of needfull things, and ſure ſafety all about them: happy is he that can ſay, The Lord is my Shepheard; he that is not of this fold, is of the Devils waſt; Chriſt hath many promiſes of good to be done unto his flock, and for his flockes ſake it is he cannot abide the Wolfe, of which one is no good Neigbour, and the other, a deadly enemy to Sheep; I count him the Wolfe which is the knowne adverſary, and the Goat is the looſe Chriſtian; the adverſary hath a bloudy mind,

and

and the looſe Chriſtian is offenſive by an ill life.

Meditation 13.

Dulneſſe of Spirit.

THere is no diſeaſe more dangerous to a religious Soule, then dulneſſe or heavineſſe of Spirit, which makes the ground of the heart ſo cold, that the ſeed of grace lyeth for a time, as it were dead, and hath no growth: it makes the Chriſtian either fearfull or ſlow to doe good, and layeth him open to tentations: it ariſeth from the corruption of nature which is froward, increaſeth by diſeaſes and diſcontentments, and groweth to a head by particular doubts and uncertainties: it hath ſtrange Symptomes,

tomes, even in thoſe which have beene well ſchooled and trained up in Chriſtianity: it ſuggeſteth and would perſwade them well-neare, that it is all as well with the godleſſe as the godly, that he is in as good cauſe, that ſweareth as he that feareth an oath, that an upright conſcience is but a ceremonious ſcrupuloſity, formality and complement may ſerve as well, that the world is not ſo unworthy a thing, as lightly to be ſet by, and the joyes of Heaven belong rather to Angels then men: it is offended at hearing or reading Gods word, prayers, good workes, holy meetings, and hath ſome exception againſt them all; it will perſwade thee in particular, that God doth not regard or ſo much as reſpect thy ſervice, and cloſe with thee this at laſt, if thy calling bee ſo worthy as thou

thou wouldſt make it; yet art thou unworthy of thy calling, unfit, and ſo farre from ſpeeding in it, that it were better for thee to doe any other thing, or juſt nothing. I know not whereunto I may better compare this diſeaſe, then to that which in women yong with child they call Longing, when the ſtomach ſtopt with ill humours, the appetite is altered, and the Patient importunately deſireth ſtrange meats; ſo in this cauſe naturall inbred corruptions ſtriving againſt grace, and abounding within, doe alter the godly appetite, making Gods ſervant loath his ordinary diet, and exerciſes, as being uncomfortable, unſavory, and to affect ſtrange things contrary to the health of the Soule. They which travell by Sea when they ſee it once calme, and on a ſudden to

dance

dance and ſhake, and know no cauſe why, looke for a tempeſt ſhortly after; ſo this dulneſſe or heavineſſe which is ſo unquiet and out of order, goeth many times before ſome greater ſinne; let it be conſidered whether ſuch a kind of dulneſſe came not on *David* before his adultery, and numbring the people; on the Diſciples, before they forſooke their maſter, and ſpecially on *Peter* before he denied his Lord. I put a difference betweene this heavineſſe or dulneſſe of ſpirit, and that hardneſſe of heart, deadneſſe or benumming, which is proper to the wicked: in cauſe; for that proceeds from cuſtomes and habits in ſinne, from wilfull ſtubberneſſe; this from the reliques of corruption, yet abiding in Gods children: in degree; that is without ſenſe or feeling, like a lethargy,

gy; this hath ſome reſiſtance, and like the fit of an Ague, in event: that doth make them worſe, and in the end overcome them; this the godly doe overcome, and after grow the better adviſed. The meanes to avoid this dulneſſe, is to converſe with God, and to keep our hearts in fire with him, by calling to mind every day his benefits generall, particular, corporall, ſpirituall, what he hath done for thy Soule already, what he will doe farther, then to examine thy ſelfe how thou haſt beene anſwerable that day for ſuch kindneſſe and love unto thee, then to fall to prayer, asking pardon for thy ſinnes, with a faithfull and penitent heart, and entring into a new league betweene God and thy Soule, to forſake ſinne more earneſtly, and to ſerve God more carefully then in times paſt. *Medi-*

Meditation 14.

Of Joy.

IT is good to rejoyce ever; and never to rejoyce, I meane carnally: wee muſt not ſet up Joy as an Idol in our hearts, as though there were no higher matter; if a man ask us why wee are merry, wee can ſay nothing, but becauſe wee love to be merry, yet ought wee to preferre God to our Joy, and the glory of God, the good of our Neighbour, and the health of our Soules; wee muſt ſo rejoyce in temporall things, that wee barre not our ſelves from heavenly comforts; wee muſt be ſo familiar with outward things, that wee grow nothing the more ſtrange with God: if otherwiſe, wee ſell our birth-

right

right for *Eſaus* Broth, *Canaan* for the fleſh-pots of *Egypt*, and as it is commonly ſaid, Wee goe out of Gods bleſſing into a warme Sunne. Take heed then to thy ſelfe, it is lawfull for thee to uſe the bleſſings of God for thy neceſſity, I ſay more, for thy comfort and recreation, ſo farre forth as doth concerne thy perſon, yea thy ſtate and calling; but if thou uſe them for thy recreation only, and have no farther or better end, thou wilt quickly fall to the abuſe, reſpecting rather what thy appetite doth crave, then God allowes; God allowes no ſuch uſe of his creatures, as makes thee the leſſe able or willing to ſerve him, wherefore a reſtraint at leaſt in affectation touching theſe things, is better then by looſing too much the reins to our unruly fleſh, to ſuffer it to take the bridle

and

and runne away; let the feare of God be the ſteward of our expences, and it ſhall make a good account for us; if it cauſe us to paſſe by many worldly delights, yet wil yield unto our conſciences the ſounder comfort, for God doth bring unto him the joyes of the Holy Ghoſt, which willingly forſakes outward pleaſures; the later end of ſuch joyes is woe, but of this it is ſaid, No man ſhall take it from you; Wilt thou rejoyce ever? (me thought I heard thee ſay ſo) bee ſad ever to the world: if thou ſmile with it, let it bee from the teeth outward, ingage not thy heart: A ſtrange Paradox, that a man ſhould bee ſorry to make himſelfe merry; and theſe as ſtrange, wee muſt ſtand in feare to make our ſelves bold, wee muſt bee fooles to bee made wiſe, wee muſt die, that wee may live.

Meditation 15.

Humane reaſon.

IS not this our common anſwer, Have I not reaſon to do as I doe? yet are wee not to live by reaſon, but by faith, wheras we ſhould rather ſay, Doth not Gods word warrant mee to do, as I do? If Religion were but the improvement of Reaſon, how would men entertaine it as their owne, wheras now they ſuſpect it as a ſtranger? Many have thought that the Articles of Religion might winne credit from principles evident to the light of nature, and that Philoſophy hath laid as good grounds as Divinity: Surely Humane learning can convince us well enough of many things wee doe, but cannot bring us forward

in

in that wee ought to doe for ſalvation; it was a power in nature created, to obey and beleeve if it would, but now in nature decaied, it is a want, and it is not in mans will to beleeve and obey the truth; and the miſery is, that it knoweth not how to find what it hath loſt, nor ſo much as that it hath loſt any thing without a borrowed light; the word of God is the powerfull meanes whereby the Holy Ghoſt which worketh inwardly in our hearts, doth impart this light unto us; our Reaſon is naturall, Faith ſupernaturall, Reaſon is the beginning of Knowledge, but Faith of Religion. The Papiſts will ſay, they have more Reaſon for their Religion then we, for Free will, Satisfaction, Merits, Purgatory, Prayers, Latine Service, Images, Pilgrimages, Hierarchy, ſtand all

upon good grounds of Reaſon: Let us give them what they aske, wee may the more boldly challenge truth, without which there is no Religion, and to proteſt freely what wee maintaine, and wherein wee deſire by Gods grace to die, wee follow not Reaſon in making choice of Religion, but Gods word ſearching to underſtand the harder places by thoſe that are more plaine and eaſy, keeping our ſelves within the proportion of Faith, refuſing not the helpe of Humane learning for the phraſe or ſtory, neither the teſtimony of better times; by this word wee learne, that man hath no good will, nor hath his will power to returne to God, untill grace make the will willing, which of it ſelf is unwilling, and then, but not till then, doth it work with grace. What

if

if Reaſon deny this, and teach the contrary? By the word of God wee learne, that there is no ſatiſfaction for ſins beſides the death of Chriſt, no merit to eternall life but his righteouſneſſe; that ſinnes are all mortall by nature, though not equall, that mans righteouſneſſe, though done in grace is unperfect. What if Reaſon deny this and teach the contrary? By the word of God, wee learne that bread in the Sacrament is not turned into the very body of Chriſt, nor wine into his bloud, yet that it is his very body and bloud to the faithfull communicant, who is made partaker of whole Chriſt, not by a groſſe and fleſhly incorporation, but a ghoſtly and effectuall union. What if Reaſon deny this, and teach the contrary? By Gods word wee learne, that worſhipping of I-

mages amongſt Chriſtians is but a ſetting up of Idols, as amongſt the Heathen, that Prayers in a ſtrange tongue for the dead, are neither devotion nor charity. What if Reaſon deny this, and teach the contrary? By Gods word wee learne, that Religion conſiſteth not in Popiſh ſhrift, Penance, difference of Meats, Apparell, Faſting, Pilgrimage, Reliques, Croſſing, Holy-oile, Holy-water, Holy-bread, Holy-beades, Holy-bells. What if Reaſon deny this, and teach the contrary, to the decay of Chriſtian obedience, which conſiſteth in an inward mortification, and outwardly, in a patient bearing of Chriſts croſſe? By the word of God, wee learne, that Chriſt is the only head of the Church, and doth ſtill governe the ſame by his ſpirit and word, from which

Gods

Gods Miniſters or Prieſts, fetch all their authority, and hath not given over his place to another, which ſhould take authority above the word. What if Reaſon deny this, and teach the contrary? By the word wee learne that the Scriptures have ſufficient inſtruction to ſalvation. What if Reaſon deny it, and put us farther over to traditions, revelations, miracles, to enforce doctrines contrary to the word, is not Reaſon juſtly to be ſuſpected in all theſe things, as thinking but too well of her ſelf, giving too much liberty to nature, and juſtifying her owne hypocriſies for Gods good ſervice, of which it will not bee ſaid, as our Saviour of the leſſer matters of the Law, the tything of Mint and Cummin, Theſe things yee ſhould have done, but rather this, Who requi-

red theſe things at your hands, for which yee have left my commandements? Now my Soule look to thy ſelfe, how thou doſt make thy choyce, regard not that antiquity, univerſality, ſucceſſion, pompe, authority, which is not grounded on the truth in the word, all theſe will follow Humane Reaſon, regard the word of the Almighty and unchangeable truth it ſelfe, which is alone ſufficient without theſe, and they without it nothing worth.

Meditation 16.

Repentance deferred.

In Summer wee can provide for Winter, in Youth wee lay up for Age, but who in health doth prepare for ſickneſſe? As long as wee

wee doe well, wee will not live well, but put it over to that time when wee have much adoe to live, then can wee not remedy what is paſt, neither have we leaſure to do better: Repentance indeed is never too late, and mercy may come on a ſudden, but repentance in health is the ordinary gift of God, in ſickneſſe extraordinary, becauſe he doth not give it him which might, and would not; thou canſt tell mee no cauſe why thou ſhouldſt not repent when thou art well, and I can tell thee many why thou canſt not repent when thou art ſick, thy heart is a ſtranger to goodneſſe, and God to thee, hardly canſt thou heare good counſell, but it is the hardeſt of all to ſettle thy ſelfe on it then when all things grow ſo troubleſome and uncertaine. Many have

ſaid it is too late, would I could have followed it in times paſt, neither have wee leaſure to doe better; Repentance indeed is never too late, but ſickneſſe is the time paſt, yet wilt thou not repent in health; Doſt thou make but a paſtime of repentance? take heed leſt ſickneſſe be unto thee the end of a bad life, which in health thou wouldſt not amend, and deliver thee over to endleſſe death. Oh my ſoule, remember thy owne eſtate, thou didſt put over repentance, and God did put thee over to ſickneſſe; What diſcomfort was it to thinke on ſinnes paſt, what little hope hadſt thou of good to come? how unable waſt thou to recollect thy ſelfe? what meanes didſt thou want to bee raiſed up? if thou hadſt any holy deſire, any feeling at the laſt, thou wert more bound to thy Saviour, which ſought

ſought thee out a wandring ſheep; Where art thou now my ſoule, what doeſt thou, that which thou didſt then promiſe to cloſe nearer with thy God, who hath given life to thy deſire, and yeares to thy life, ſurely I have eſcaped a great harme and outlived my ſelfe, good Lord have mercy on mee, and graunt that I forget not thy goodneſſe, nor betray my ſelfe any more into the hands of danger; thou knoweſt well enough what I am, the worſe for my abuſed health, and if any thing the better for my ſickneſſe, it is thy favour; I like not my amendment halfe ſo well, as I heartily lament my neglected time.

Medita-

Meditation 17.

Gifts of God and Men.

ALl bleſſings without that one, for whoſe ſake they are beſtowed, are but a curſe, other bleſſings are given for a good life, which is the chiefeſt bleſſing; they are good, but this makes us good; they make us welcome to men, as ſtrength makes us welcome to the weake, learning to the ſimple, wealth to them which want, authority to ſuch as are oppreſſed, but this makes us welcome to our owne conſciences, which entertaine us with a continuall feaſt, to God which ſayes, welcome good ſervant; for them wee muſt make reckoning, but for this wee ſhall receive a crowne of righteouſneſſe: yet ſee! that men altogether

gether admire and desire most the former kind of gifts, to them give they a stile, they come not without grace, excellency, majesty, holinesse, they call those that have them, rulers, benefactors, Lords, Princes, but a good man is in no note, no request, and indeed he needs it not, for he hath more then all the world can give him, and his commendation is not from men, but God. Christ our Saviour the wisest steward, provided not for himselfe or us blessings of the former kind, but of the latter; *Judas* had the bagge and *Peter* the sword: but Christ in his heart had righteousnesse, even to his lipps outwardly; there was no guile found in his mouth, and what he did by doctrine, miracles, passion for us, tended to this end, that being delivered from the captivity of sinne, wee might bee made

made free men of righteouſneſſe, and ſhew forth good workes to Gods glory. The greateſt gifts to this purpoſe that ever were beſtowed on mankind, was on that glorious day, a white and happy day, the Lords day, a ſunday, 50 daies after the reſurrection, when according to his promiſe like a Prince new crowned, he ſhowred down the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt on his Church, cloven and fiery tongues, interpretatiõ of tongues, knowledge to open the Scriptures, and to apply them, prophecy, healing, diſcerning of ſpirits, and the like; by which gifts Chriſt hath ſubdued the world, and brought men from Idolatry and wickedneſſe, to true godlineſſe and righteouſneſſe: amongſt which doe excell Apoſtles, Martyrs, Confeſſors, Virgins, more famous in chriſtianity then the demi-gods

demi-gods, which anciently in the ruder times of the world, have ſtored it with the rare invention of divers things profitable to the life of man. Oh my ſoule, how haſt thou admired ſtate greatneſſe, authority, poſſeſſion, traine and pompe, and if not to be one of them, yet to bee neere unto them, and though farther of, yet that the beames of ſuch glory might ſhine on thee? And now obſerve whether in the meane while God hath not offered thee, and thou by thy neglect haſt loſt better things, and ſo haſt proved to God unthankfull, unprofitable to thy ſelfe: Call to mind thy baptiſme, what intends it? that thou following this moſt honourable profeſſion into which thou haſt entered, ſhouldeſt bee enabled and incouraged to live a new life after the ſpirit, and become

come a good man to God: to this purpoſe comming to diſcretion, God inſtructed thee in his word, there waſt thou made acquainted with the royall law, his ſtatutes and ordinances, and with all the proviſions, cautions, admonitions drawne from the ſame by the Prophets; hence wert thou led on to the Goſpell, which met thee with abundant and effectuall grace, and for thy better aſſurance that thou art received into the ſociety and body of Chriſt, he fed thee often in his bleſſed Sacrament with his owne body and bloud, and for thy better guide in this courſe of ſalvation, he hath afforded thee his owne, and the examples of his holy ones, which have ſhined as lights in a darke place. What doth want unto thee, that in the ſight of God thou art above all that is great

great in the world? think not then too highly of tranſitory things, nor too baſely of thy ſelfe, remember what thou haſt received, and whereunto God calleth thee, and thou ſhalt have no cauſe to complaine of thy lot.

Meditation 18.

Suſpition.

I Know not wherefore Suſpition is good, except on juſt cauſe, and then it is providence; but to make our idle conjectures the arrowes, and other men the butts, and to hit them which are not in our way, becauſe wee have a crooked aime: this is for want of charity, and from too much love of our ſelves; wee love our ſelves ſo well, that wee would

have all men worſe then our ſelves, and ſo little doe wee love others, that wee care not how bad wee make them. If Suſpition hunt like a yong dogge which knowes not his game, it is taken oft with a lye, and falls ſoone into a dead fault; but if it worke an experience and triall, it gives ſoone over where it is not good, and never holds but where it ſhould. Vaine feares and vaine ſuſpitions are much like, for feare makes us ſuſpect the helpes which might do us good, and Suſpition makes us feare friends, which meane us no hurt; and both betray their followers, feare to danger, and Suſpition to ſhame, the one by refuſing her owne ſtrength, the other by diſcovering his owne weakneſſe. If Suſpition come of weakneſſe it is the more tolerable, but if for want of charity,

and

and ſtrengthned with malice, it is intolerable, and to be hated, for it rangeth farre, and runneth riot, and will bee under no command, you ſhall never ſatisfy it though you would, neither can it ſatisfy it ſelfe but by complaints. What poyſon lieth hid under Suſpition may appeare, becauſe it breedeth jealouſy betweene man and wife, for what is jealouſy, but the Suſpition of a ſtranger? In this cauſe the parties are ſo diſquieted, that the joy which they took by each other doth decay, their ſociety becomes odious, and a curſed parting (the bane of holy wedlock) followes. The ſuſpitious man as he is no good husband, ſo is he a bad neighbour and a worſe friend, an unruly ſervant, and a crooked maſter, he miſtakes more then he takes in good part, he will not lend a good turne for

feare

feare of loſing his labour, and and yet hath loſt all judgment, becauſe he will not lend ſo much as a good opinion, hee heares what men ſpeak when they are ſilent, and ſeeth them doing ſomething amiſſe when they are aſleepe, he doth challenge the faireſt proceedings of a foule intent, he thinkes all men naught and is the worſt himſelfe, he truſts no man in private and is publiquely noted, he hath a window in every mans breaſt, and an eye into every mans window; a cleare minde thinkes of others as of himſelfe at all times; he doth paſſe over that which may have any good conſtruction, & many times takes no notice of ill or offence, he conſults not with tales and opinions, but out of diſcretion, and obſerves both what humane ſociety doth require, and how far charity must

muſt bear and may win a ſtranger.

Meditation 19.

Of Gaine.

A Deſire of Gaine, if wee have a greater deſire of Gods glory and the common good, if it be limited within the bounds of nature and honeſty, if it be our owne and not to gaine by anothers loſſe, is not to be condemned, yet are wee ſcarſly to deſire Gaine by our Saviours rule: That which wee may lawfully deſire, we may honeſtly ſeeke, but Chriſt will not have us ſeeke the things belonging to Gaine, but to the kingdome of God, and to accept the other as it falleth out; meaning that our whole purpoſe of living here, ſhould be ſet on our ſpirituall

ſpirituall life with God, to make our advantage that way, and that our naturall and civill life ſhould receive their convenient bleſſings from God, without our cark or vexation, though not without our employment, without gaining our affections, though commanding our meanes. There is ſometimes a fault in the deſire when it is greedy, and in the Gaine when it is filthy, and commonly a greedy deſire doth not refuſe filthy Gaine, and when they goe both together it is the worſe. Uſury is not only a deſire, but a greedy deſire of filthy Gaine, yea unſatiable and cruell, a Gaine and a ſtaine to the Soule of him that uſeth it, a Gaine and a paine to the heart of him that payeth it, a Gaine and a traine of the Devill, by the love of mony to bring men to perdition: Yea

but

but much good commeth to the Common-wealth by uſury; and the like is ſaid of witch-craft, men elſe will not lend, as much to ſay as they will not be Chriſtians; but will you bee ſo bold as to condemne all uſury? I referre you to your conſcience a little rectified, deale as you would be dealt with-all, abuſe not thy neighbours want, uſe the honeſt meanes of ſome calling, depend on Gods bleſſing, and tell mee what courſe of uſury is lawfull, many lend not for themſelves but for Orphanes. A ſpeciall cauſe, and hath ſpeciall rules of conſcience; many pay uſe, the occaſion of borrowing may accuſe or excuſe; the greateſt Gaine, and the ſureſt profit is God lives, for it hath the promiſes of this life and that which is to come, and joyneth piety with proſperity; But what

are

are promiſes worth (ſay ſome) who will ſtand on them? promiſes are but debts, and debts are not willingly paid though promiſed by forfeit under hand and ſeale. True betweene man and man, but betweene God and man not ſo, becauſe his promiſe is better then any mans performance; think not ſmall of the promiſe of his love. But I ſee no experience, I have no feeling of th's promiſe, *David* did when he ſaid I never ſaw the righteous forſaken. *David* many times beleeved without feeling, and ſo doe thou, if thou find it hard, pray that thou maiſt, for it is full of reward. If thou be godly, I permit thee to deale with the earth, or naturall ready and ordinary Gaine, ſhee takes no hurt, thou much advantage; thy diligence maketh her bountifull, thou lendeſt a litle

little, and ſhee payes thee home with great ſtore; I know thou wilt as willingly deale with the poore, an excellent uſury, God is the pay-maſter, not according to thy merit, but far above, of his owne mercy; for the intereſt of unrighteous Mammon, behold a crowne of righteouſneſſe with Chriſt: for him, forſake Father, Mother, Brother, Siſter, Houſe and what not elſe! and receive a hundred fold, is not this Gaine enough? will not ſuch Gaine content thy deſire? this or none. Two things haſt thou (oh my ſoule) to avoid about worldly Gaine, diſtruſt, if it come not; ſecurity, if it doe: Doe thy meanes faile? thou haſt a father carefull of thee above all meanes; Art thou not rich to the world? it is better to bee rich towards God; of a little give a little, God reſpecteth

according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not, and loveth a cheerfull rather then a coſtly giver; thou muſt learne to wait on God from day to day, it is thy obedience, his glory; if thou bee rich, thy account will bee the harder to make. Things themſelves are not good to thee, but in their lawfull uſe, they ſerve not thy turne except thou ſerve God with them, make not that a ſnare to entangle thee in vanity, which is given thee for the exerciſe of vertue; Alas, why complaineſt thou when any croſſe interrupts thy worldly proceedings, and doſt not feele the loſſe of ſpirituall grace, whiles thou art thwarted in a good courſe by ſinne? why art thou ſo well pleaſed at good ſucceſſe, and doſt not rejoyce rather for the good ſeedes of thy regeneration,

ration, for the fruits of thy faith, hope, love, zeale, patience, chaſtity, meekneſſe, temperance, ſobriety and the reſt, for that thou haſt found or art directed in the way, to find the treaſure of ineſtimable worth and value, to wit, the keeping of a good conſcience? this that thou doſt not, ought to make thee mourne and lament, and thou ſhouldeſt not take comfort in that wealth which keeps thee from feeling thy dayly want and enjoying ſound proſperity.

Meditation 20.

Of Giving.

GAining is good if it bee to give, for Giving is better; God gaines nothing by any, yet

gives all, that is his perfection; the light of the Sun and Moone, the influence of the Planets, the ſweetneſſe of the aire, the variety of ſeaſons, the fatneſſe of the cloudes, the fruitfulneſſe of the earth, the fulneſſe of the Sea, the vertue of herbes, the beauty of flowers, the profit of beaſts and cattle, the price of Gold, Silver, and pretious ſtones are nothing to him, nay the redemption of mankind, the gathering of the Saints, the gifts of the Church, the graces of men, our regeneration, ſanctification, prayers, ſacrifices and ſervices are nothing to him, for he is his owne perfection; ours it is to gaine and give, receive and beſtow, of all things beſides God it may be ſaid, what have they which they have not received? yea the creatures which have moſt, as Angels and men

men have received moſt, and are the more bound to the giver, wherefore their firſt perfection is to receive, but becauſe to give, to beſtow, is a farther extent of perfection, and more anſwerable to the perfection of him which is the giver of all good, therefore is it a better thing, and as our Saviour ſaid, by *Pauls* report, a more bleſſed, to give, rather then to receive, a better good, the chiefe good; a better good, that's vertue, the chief good, that's happineſſe; the life of every vertue is action, and happineſſe the perfection of actions, and action of vertue is nothing elſe but a giving of good in ſome kind, as the act of juſtice, to give every one his owne, of fortitude to give courage againſt death, of temperance to give a meaſure to pleaſures, of prudence to give order to affaires, of libe-

rality to give gifts where and when it is convenient, and therefore as wee ſay, there is a kind of juſtice in all vertues; ſo is there a kind of liberality, though one kind of giving for his uſe and excellency be ſo ſpecially called, for he which giveth of his owne to relieve another, doth it moſt freely without any conſideration to move him, beſides the love of vertue, and for the good which comes thereof is deemed a God amongſt men, for which cauſe Princes are by a ſpeciall title termed Gods, becauſe as their places require them to doe all vertuous actions more then others, ſo above all, they are enabled to give liberally, and by giving to helpe many; he that doth good unto his neighbour according to the action of any vertue, gives him his helpe more worth then goods,

and

and therefore gives in the true nature of giving, and if his helpe be for the ſoule and the life to come, the gift is greater then if it pertained to this life only; and yet I know not how they which give out their goods freely to the comfort of others, win a more deep affection and excellent reputation, then they which doe good according to any other vertue: yea a liberall man hath the commendation of all vertue, hee is thought wiſe, becauſe he knowes the true uſe of riches; valiant, becauſe he can overcome the covetous deſire which rules too many; juſt, becauſe hee willingly makes that to be anothers, which is his owne; becauſe he thinkes it more due unto him for the good which may come thereof; temperate, becauſe hee doth withdraw much from ſuperfluity and

exceſſe, that he may have where-with to doe others good, and hee will ſpend the leſſe to give the more. Wee muſt gaine then that wee may give, and wee muſt receive that wee may beſtow, and doe good with that wee have, the one is bleſſed for the other, and therefore the latter rather bleſſed then the other; but hee which thinkes that to keepe in his gaines is the only way to doe himſelfe good, as if they were all loſt, if others ſhould occupy with him, hath as poore a trade as he which hid his talent in a napkin, of which came no advantage for lack that it was not put out: every Chriſtian muſt know himſelfe to bee as it were the ſtomach, to digeſt, and diſperſe thoſe gifts which he receiveth, to the good of Chriſts body; Chriſt emptied himſelfe to fill us, hee being

being rich (ſaith *Paul*) for your ſakes became poore, that you through his poverty might bee made rich; What he got of his Father, by his holy life or patient death, he beſtoweth on us, and what he might juſtly claime at our hands, for his gifts beſtowed on us, he leaves to bee diſpoſed by us, to the good of our mother, as the Tithes of our goods on the Miniſters which watch not for his, but our good; Almes of our goods, which the poore receive, and hee accepteth and rewardeth, as if they were beſtowed on himſelfe; and if he beſtow a ſpirituall grace on mee, he looks not for the returne, but puts it over to the brethren, as when he ſaid, I have prayed for thee *Peter*, that thy faith faile not, ſtrengthen thy brethren; and for the good inſtruction which wee

receive in the Church to our ſoules health, hee bindes us to teach and exhort one another. A Chriſtian then hath a life both active and paſſive, the one all in receiving, the other all in giving: he doth receive faith, hope, charity; and all this while nature doth nothing, grace doth all: then after by grace he liveth in doing good, according to his faith, hope, and love; the firſt life brings him into the favour of God, the ſecond into the poſſeſſion of his kingdome; to doe thy ſelfe moſt good is to depart with thy goods unto others, and in this cauſe they are kept better to ſerve thy turne, then if they were in thine owne keeping, for if thy treaſure be in the hand of the poore, Chriſt is thy treaſurer, who will make thee good account of all ſuch expenſes. I ſpeak

ſtrange

ſtrange things to the eares of men, addicted to this life, where plenty is before want, and proſperity before poverty, to whom giving ſeemes ſpending, and receiving a fruitfull harveſt, but to the ſpirituall man whoſe life is in God, it is plaine as grounded upon a true contempt of the world, and is the right exerciſe of charity which Chriſtians muſt regard, and Chriſt at the laſt day will confirme it to be true, by that finall judgment, when hee ſhall pronounce them bleſſed which have given, and others curſed which have had more care to gaine, then give. Oh my ſoule think nothing thine, that charity bids thee ſpare, or if it be thine, it is by the right of uſing it well to the good of others, for the reſt thou ſhalt anſwer, as for things ſtollen.

Meditation 21.

Say well and doe well.

LEt every man ſpeake as hee meanes, but firſt let him meane well, for he which uſeth to ſpeak well and hath no good meaning, doth ſoone prove a diſſembler: it is ſimply good alwaies to meane well, for that cauſeth a man to ſpeak well, and to be the ſame in deed which he is in word; let every man ſpeak as he liſt, ſo he live well, ſaith another, as though men could ſpeak without affecting, as many times they ſpeak without truth. He that doth uſe to ſpeak ill will ſhortly bee the man he ſpeakes of, transforming himſelfe by little and little into the Image of his owne words; ſuch a man indeed ſpeakes plainly,

ly, but dangerouſly to himſelfe and others, for his meaning being no better then his ſpeech, he imboldens himſelfe and corrupts others; and this is the rule, Cuſtome of good ſpeech doth not alter the meaning which is ill, but the uſe of ill ſpeech doth alter the meaning which is good, and make it naught: whence it is, if I heare a man ſpeak well, I am ſtill uncertain, but if I ſee him do well, then I certainely know him, though he bee ſilent, becauſe his meaning is ſhewed truly in deed, which in words is dark or doubtfull. It is the proverb, Say well is good, but do well is better; How is it good if it make not a bad man the better, or prove not one to be good? nay it is oft times the vizard of a foule face, the curtaine of an uncleane bed, the plaiſter of a feſtered ſoare, the ſeeling of ſome

rotten

rotten wall, and is firſt a countenance to ſinne, which lyeth hid under it, and in the end a diſgrace to goodneſſe, as though it were nothing elſe but verball: Wherefore ſay well is good, not poſitively, or ſimply of it ſelfe, but privatively, that is, leſſe hurtfull then doing or ſaying ill, reſpectively as it is joyned with a good meaning, ſo ſay well is good when it ſhewes a man as he is affected, but doe well is better, for that is the fruit of a good affection. The veſſell doth yeeld ſuch liquor as it hath, and as the mans trade is, ſo is his talke: oh my ſoule conceive thy thoughts according to the *Idea* of that divine goodneſſe, which thy mind doth behold, and when they are borne into words, *Jacobs* lambes ſhall not be more like the party-coloured ſtickes, laid before the Ewes,

in

in time of conception, then thy words and deeds ſhall be unto that *Idea*; but if thou ſuffer thy ſelfe to talke without good meaning, thy words ſhall be without feeling, and rather to condemne thy ſelfe then to amend others. Another proverb is, that true meaning hath no fellow; there is none to whom thou maiſt commit thy ſelfe more ſafely, and which will doe thee more good then true meaning; it will ſave thee from ſinne and ſhame, and make thy word and deed both one, and it will cauſe thy friend ſafely to commit himſelfe unto thee, and to find as much good in thy words and deeds, as thou doſt in thy owne true meaning; by it thou ſhalt free thy ſelfe from much lip-labour, and ſtudy of eloquence, for true meaning ſhall teach thee to ſpeak in few words,

and

and yet to bee well underſtood, and ſhall adde ſuch grace and force to thy words, as if perſwaſion her ſelfe did ſpeak for thee: but who ſpeakes without true meaning hath loſt his voice, becauſe he ſpeaketh from an hollow heart which yeelds an uncertaine ſound, and if men heare any thing it is the leaſt part, and as an eccho it is preſently gone; A ſound heart makes a ſound tongue, the tongue in nature cannot, and in reaſon ſhould not move without the heart, and therfore if the tongue move of it ſelfe, or before the heart, order is broken, and it is ominous: to ſay as wee meane, is to follow God who is truth it ſelfe; but to doe otherwiſe is to imitate the practice of the Devill, who by this deceived our firſt parents.

Medi-

Meditation 22.

Of Obedience.

THere is an Obedience of the Law, and an Obedience of Faith; the Obedience of the Law tels mee what I ought to be, the Obedience of faith leades mee unto it; the Obedience of the law condemns mee, for not being as I ought, the Obedience of faith doth quit mee from the law; the Obedience of the law doth bring mee into bondage of the curſe, the Obedience of faith makes mee an inheritor of the bleſſing; in my mind I doe allow the obedience of the law, but in my conſcience I truſt to the Obedience of faith; I am cõtent that my life be ordered by the Obedience of the law, but look to be cenſured by the Obedi-

Obedience of faith; The Obedience of the law hath boaſting and merits, repentance, pardon, acceptation, deſire unfaigned, belong not to the Obedience of the law, but of faith; I have nothing to boaſt of, except I ſhould boaſt of my owne ſhame, and I have no claime but mercy: Except God look on my repentance and forgive my ſinnes in Chriſt, except he do accept what is done in his feare, and pardon what is left undone, except he regard my deſire, more then my deſerving, and meaſure my deſires rather by their ſincerity, then their ſtrength, what will become of mee?

Medi-

Meditation 23.

Temptation.

SHake not hands with any Tentation, but turne quickly and fly ſpeedily from it, as *Joſeph* did from his Miſtreſſe; it is a greater hap not to goe downe into ſuch a pit, then any ſure hope to returne out of it. Oh my ſoule thou knoweſt what I meane, and thou feeleſt the danger, thou canſt more truly diſlike ſinne then leave it, and hate it then be rid of it; yet he which commanded *Lazarus* forth of the grave, can raiſe thee, and hath he not done a like thing for thee? Why doſt thou ſtill love danger to fall into it? I neither love the danger nor the fall, but ſinne pleades cuſtome, and the more I yeeld, the leſſe

leſſe able am I to reſiſt. I am only ſtrong in opinion, but weake in Tentation, and I find more ſafety in flying then fighting; while I ſtand on my guard, my weapons to which I ordinarily truſt, are ſtriken out of my hands, the baſe towne of my ſenſes is ſurpriſed, the caſtle of reaſon ſo battered and ſhaken, that conſent who is Captaine of the place falls to a parley, and yeeldes on any conditions to my loſſe: How far better had it beene for mee to have avoided the fury of *Saul*, by wandering in the wilderneſſe, barring my ſelfe of thoſe betwitching vanities!

Medi-

Meditation 24.

Preſumption and Deſpaire.

PReſumption and deſpaire, the two extremities of faith; faith grounds it ſelfe on the promiſe of God, preſumption aſſumes unto it ſelfe Gods mercy without promiſe, deſperation takes no comfort by the promiſe; Preſumption intrudes it ſelfe into the promiſe, deſperation excludes it ſelfe out of the promiſe, faith holdes the promiſe faſt, as his proper right; Preſumption is more bold with God then wiſe, deſperation puts a man more in feare then is ſafe, faith without boldneſſe or feare, is confident; Preſumption hurts the conſcience moſt, and layes it open to ſinne, deſperation wrongs God

God moſt, as though he would not or could not be mercifull to a ſinner, faith doth keep the conſcience from ſinne to come, and makes the way for Gods mercy, for the pardon of ſinnes paſt; Preſumption hath an eye only on the mercy of God, deſperation on his juſtice, and faith doth behold in God both juſtice and mercy; Preſumption is fed by proſperity, impunity, Gods long ſufferance, deſperation ſtrengthened by ſome ſpeciall croſſe and adverſity, at what time ſinnes appeare greater, and more in number then before, Faith ſtandeth on the death of Chriſt, and there doth ſee both the greatneſſe and grievouſneſſe of ſinne, and findeth a way to eſcape the danger; Preſumption doth deſpiſe the juſtice of God, the feare whereof might make him fit for mercy, deſperation cannot apply

unto

unto it ſelfe the mercy of God in time of need, the helpe whereof might cauſe him to avoid juſtice; Preſumption doth cauſe a man to think well of himſelfe, of his own wiſedome, righteouſneſſe, and to preferre himſelfe before others, deſperation doth cauſe a man to think ill of God, and no otherwiſe then of a tyrant; Preſumption is a *Phariſee*, deſpaire a Devill, ſaith the penitent Publican; finally Preſumption is a ſteep cliffe without footing, deſperation a deep pit without bottome, and ſaith *Iacobs* ladder, by which God comes downe to man, and man goes up to God. Oh my ſoule thou beſt knoweſt thy owne wandring, there lies danger on both ſides, the common waies are the worſt, and that the ſafeſt which feweſt find; let thy guid be the word of God, walk by faith, purpoſe

poſe not to offend, though pardon were granted thee before hand. Haſt thou offended? ſeeke for mercy, not conſidering ſo much how great thy ſinnes are, but how great is his mercy to them that truly repent. A good conſcience may preſume of mercy, when it hath no feeling, expecting Gods leaſure with patience, and this is to hope above hope, and deſpaire of her owne ſufficiency when it doth moſt good, ſo learning to depend ever on God alone.

Meditation 25.

Society with God.

MAn by nature is ſociable, and of all Societies none better for him, if it may be had, then

tien that with God: for if wee enter into a common right with them, of whoſe Society wee are, how much ſhall wee by this Society bee bleſſed above all others, which poſſeſſe God, who is the fulneſſe of all good things, and are ſo poſſeſſed of him, that nothing ſhall bee able to part us from him? Now behold how thou maiſt attaine to this neere and inward ſociety with God, he which dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him, for God is love, a holy flame burning with the love of goodneſſe, the Father loveth the Sonne eternally, and the Sonne the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt is one and the ſame incomprehenſible love of the Father and the Sonne, three perſons but one love, for God is love, and this inferior love of the creature is but a beame, a ſtreame of that love,

which if it bee ſo neceſſary betweene the creatures themſelves, that the courſe of things may not bee maintained without it, how much more betweene the Creator, and the creature? for both the being and well-being of the creature, doth depend on the love of the Creator, and theſe creatures are the leſſe happy, how excellent ſo ever otherwiſe, as the Sunne, Moone, and other glorious bodies, which being loved of God, cannot love him againe. Oh man, what cauſe haſt thou to love God, wch was not content only to make thee a creature, whom he would love, but endued thee alſo with a nature to love him againe, that ſo thou mightest enjoy him the more: and certainly as the being of God is love, ſo there can bee no greater perfection in men, then to love God. God doth give moſt

moſt glorious ſignes of his preſence in Heaven, but out of doubt the Heaven of his delights, and where he is alwaies preſent, is the ſoule of a true lover. Love is a quiet thing, yet not idle, active as heat, and nouriſhing goodneſſe like a naturall heat; it is much in giving, much in forgiving; in giving to God his honour, to man convenient helpe and ſuccour; in forgiving wrongs and injuries. Loves kindred is not of fleſh and bloud, a Chriſtian unto it is more deare then a brother, and a brother the more deare, if a good Chriſtian. Love ſoares over all the pleaſures, the riches, the honours of the world, and ſtoopes downe to none of theſe, becauſe with the Eagle it findes nothing worth the looking on, but Chriſt Jeſus the ſonne of righteouſneſſe. The priviledge of love is this,

where there is love it is accepted, not according to the worke, but for the worker, according to that one hath, and not according to that he hath not; many overſights are borne with, where there is love; and where there is no love, the greateſt diligence is rejected. Oh my ſoule, faile in any other thing, rather then in love; though a ſmall meaſure of knowledge muſt content thee, yet love God out of meaſure, above thy ſelfe for himſelfe; doe good unfaignedly, if not ſtrongly; and let thy heart be ready, when it hath made thy hand empty.

Medita-

Meditation 26.

Of Peace.

I Would that all they which are of one opinion, were of one affection: How well doth it become them that profeſſe one truth to maintaine peace as one man, becauſe the author of their truth hath commended peace unto them, as the fruit of goodneſſe, which ſpringeth up in them that love the truth? Now becauſe they which are one in opinion, are many times differing in affection, truth it ſelfe which is but one, ſeemes to be rent in parts, and is ill ſpoken of by adverſaries, which agree with true profeſſors neither in opinion nor affection, and ſhall I wiſh likewiſe, that they which are of one affe-

ction, as man and wife, parents and children, brother and ſiſter, maſter and ſervant were of one opinion? How neceſſary is it that they which agree in the leſſer matters of life, ſhould in the greater much more; and that they which have vowed to be true to one another, ſhould be both true to Chriſt? but now becauſe they which are of one affection doe ſquare in opinion, the knot of love is broken which truth doth commend, and it ſeemes that truth is the author of confuſion; what then indeed is to be wiſhed? that our opinions be ruled with truth, and our affections tempered with love, and this will bring the diverſities of men to a world of univerſity, wherein though there be differing parts, both for ſtuffe and uſe, yet they ſhall all tend to the good of one another,

and

and ſo of the whole chiefly, inſomuch if that come in queſtion once, every particular will loſe ſome part of his intereſt, rather then the whole ſhall labour; and this ſhall be done more ſtrongly by the guide of reaſon, then by the inſtinct of nature, where for the ſame cauſe, ſometimes heavy things climb upwards, and light ſtoop downe, contrary to both their proper rights; And were it this, then muſt wee all needs be of one opinion, of one affection, that is, Chriſtians both in name and in truth: for this is the thing which our Chriſtian profeſſion doth chaime of us, and a thing rather indeed to be wiſhed then hoped for; and I think God hath of purpoſe placed us to live amongſt ſuch, which if they doe agree with us in affection, they ſhall diſagree from us in opinion,

ſo barring us of this unity, either for the exerciſe of our vertue, or that wee ſhould bee out of love with the world, and long for the other to come, where wee ſhall perfectly enjoy it. Howſoever in the meane ſpace, they which will nouriſh in themſelves any hope of comming to ſuch happineſſe promiſed, muſt maintaine this band of unity, in the communion of Saints, and that is not only to love the truth, but alſo in truth. Oh my ſoule, labour for truth, and ſuffer many things for Peace, prefer the truth before all things, but uſe the truth to winne thy brother; thou knoweſt how much truth doth belong to thee as a man, reaſon ſearcheth truth; more as a Chriſtian, faith receives truth; give thankes to God, if thou meet with ſuch as can teach thee, and bee as ready to teach others;

others; this will bee a ſtay from wandring opinions which have no end: but if thou meet with ſuch as love the truth with thee, and affect thee in the truth, give God thankes for ſuch a heavenly bleſſing, and let not thy oile bee wanting to keep ſuch a lamp burning: Brethren indeed are they, which are of the ſame profeſſion and affection, Chriſt is the head of their ſociety, it will never want life, the ſpring of their affection, it will never want love; and what ſoever ſpirituall comfort thou haſt in this life, remember the greater part is behind, and therefore lift up thy ſelfe for that day, when thou ſhalt bee preſent with the Lord.

Meditation 27.

Of Love.

TO love the truth is the more worthy Love, and yet to love in truth more urged and required, becauſe that as in the firſt, there is more excellence in reſpect of the object, ſo in the ſecond more evidence, in reſpect of the ſubject; and though by the order of teaching, wee learne, firſt to love the truth, and then to love in truth, yet according to the order of nature wee can never profit much in the firſt, till wee have well practiſed the other, for love is ſtirred up by ſight and he that loveth not his brother whom he dayly ſees, how can he love God whom he never ſaw? So God loveth us firſt, after wee love him, but this

this love cannot reach to that heighth, except by certaine degrees we climb up thither, beginning the love of God in the love of our brother; Is not he worthy of my love, whom God hath made partaker of his? and if I forme my ſelfe to love all men as brethren, ſhall I not love God the more, which loves all thoſe whom I do love? As we know, ſo wee love, but God would have us to know and acknowledge himſelfe, firſt in our brother, and to caſt our eyes upon him as his Image; and therefore if this may not move us to a due conſideration of love, for the Image ſake, neither will wee love him for his owne ſake, who is yet more unknowne unto us. In love it is a ſpeciall point to obſerve the diſpoſition of the beloved, for this makes Love acceptable; now God

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is ſpecially pleaſed, when the duties which in Love wee owe unto him, are for his ſake done unto our brother, and therefore when wee reſigne up our hearts to ſerve God, which is the chiefeſt of our Love, wee muſt expreſſe it in ſtriving to do good one unto another in Love; and he that is thus affected, cannot bee careleſſe of his brother, or comfortleſſe unto him. Love like fire, it can neither bee idle when it hath matter to work on, nor lye hid; water will not quench it; cover it you cannot, but the flame will break forth: The true lover of God doth embrace him in his heart, his mind ever thinkes on him, and his will deſires him; But this is raked up and hidden in the inner man, how breaks it forth? by reſpecting and affecting all men for Gods ſake, to his power, above

above his power, bearing their neceſſities, forbearing their wrongs, feeling with them in joy or grief, taking part of their harmes, and imparting his owne advantages unto them. God hath made all his creatures, that in them wee might know his power, reverence his greatneſſe, admire his wiſedome, and be thankfull unto him for his bounty, but the only uſe which wee can make one of another is this, that by mutuall love for Gods ſake, wee love God, not as in his worke onely, which may bee ſaid of the reſt, but as in his likeneſſe, which no work elſe can yeeld us. Doſt thou then love the Olive becauſe of his fatneſſe, or the Vine becauſe of his ſtrength, or the Figge-tree becauſe of his ſweetneſſe? doſt thou love the Sunne becauſe he is King of the day, or the Moone becauſe ſhee

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is Queene of the night? doſt thou love the Fire becauſe of his heat, or the Water becauſe of its moiſture? doſt thou love the Aire becauſe it doth refreſh; or the Earth becauſe it doth cheriſh thee? yet haſt thou a greater cauſe then any of theſe to love thy brother, for the likeneſſe of God which is in him: love all the Creatures, for in them God hath left the print of his footſteps, but love thy brother more then all, for in him God hath printed his owne face and faſhion. Thou wilt ſay, that coine ſhall bee currant with mee, which beares my Princes Image, and ſhall not thy brothers love be currant with thee, who beares the Image of thy God? It ſeemes when God made man, he reſolved on a likeneſſe to himſelfe, rather then any other patterne, that man ſhould love his God the better,

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and be the better beloved of another man, who is no other then a brother unto him, that is, another ſuch. Oh my ſoule, thou knoweſt well thy own backwardneſſe in this duty, and when thou wouldeſt doe any thing, thy great weakeneſſe, doſt thou not oft thinke ſo I am well all is well, what a hard charge is this to love my enemy? how unſutable to policy? what a croſſe to my life? thou doſt preferre thy reputation before common peace, thine owne advantages before thy brothers ſoules health, and doſt not conſider, how that thou maiſt not be well, except thou doe well, and doe well thou doſt not, if any thing in thee bee wanting, why thy brother is not ſo too; more, thy particular depends upon the common God: if it bee hard to love thy enemy, yet it is godly

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and for Gods cauſe, whoſe wiſedome if wee follow, let us bee counted fooles; Thou knoweſt whoſe ſpeech it is, Am I my brothers keeper? the wicked cruſh one another with ſuch thoughts, and ſpecially are cruell to the good, but they which are Chriſts, quite and quiet one another with love, oft times man is a keeper of beaſts; Why ſhould not one man have care of each other? if ſo, why not much more of a brother? if not of a brother, of whom? if of none, he which keeps thy brother, will not keep thee.

Meditation 28.

A good conſcience.

GOd is poſſeſſed by love, and the profeſſion of the truth main-

maintained by keeping a good conſcience: A good beliefe muſt bee ſtrengthned by a godly life, and a godly life ſeaſoned with a good beliefe; they are as the two twinnes, which did live together, and die together. The Chriſtian is in this world as it were in a broad Sea, his profeſſion teacheth him that his Haven is Heaven, and there is no Card or Compaſſe can ſo well direct him in a good courſe unto it, as a good conſcience, whoſe direction if once he leave, he ſoone makes ſhipwrack of his profeſſion: for to uſe thy faith with a bad conſcience is as it were to meet with a rock or whirle-poole in thy courſe; and as it is ſaid of danger, they that love it ſhall fall into it, ſo they which love the danger of an ill conſcience fall by it, by the juſt judgment of God, into

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to the gulph of divers errors contrary to their profeſſion : Doſt thou deſire to continue in this holy profeſſion, unto thy lives end? I know thou doſt; then look well unto thy conſcience: All men are ſinners by propagation, that's originall, and by imitation, that's actuall; and this is as true, that every one doth beſt know his own ſinne, and is leſſe privy to other mens ſins; wherfore the juſt man is the firſt accuſer of himſelfe, for he preſumeth as well of others as poſſibly he can, and aſſumeth nothing to himſelfe of all his goodneſſe, but freely confeſſeth that ſinne is his owne, for which he doth dayly aske pardon, with the reſt of Gods children, as, Forgive us our treſpaſſes. A Chriſtian ought to bee that towards his Conſcience which a cleanly huſwife is in her houſe, if ſhee ſee any filth

filth in the floore, or cobwebs in the walls or roofe, thee takes the beasome in hand & sweeps them out; so ought wee still to have an eye on our Conscience, and if there bee any thing offensive, let us labour to remove it, leaving nothing within, which is not pleasing to God, and comfortable to our selves; then shall God delight to dwell in such a Conscience, and wee shall delight to dwell at home in our selves: the wicked, because they have no care to keep cleane their Consciences, when they returne home to themselves, which is very seldome, find all things out of order and unquiet, which forthwith makes them seek abroad for some outward comfort, to forget the strife at home, as they which are chidden out a doores, by their curst wives: these cannot abide to look

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on their owne faces, but caſt away the glaſſe which doth diſcover their deformity; they are like bad debters which cannot abide to caſt up their accounts, and come to a reckoning; whereas the good man findeth all his comfort laid up in his owne breaſt, and hath there the light of cleare beames, though all the world elſe be benighted. Oh my ſoule, if thy Conſcience bee the Lords houſe, how cleanly ought it to be kept above all other roomes? if his temple, how oughteſt thou to perfume it with the ſweet odours of holy thoughts, meditations, purpoſes, reſolutions and prayers, the bells wherein ſhould bee continuall thankſgivings, to ſound aloud the praiſes of thy God: And this ſhall be thy warrant, that doing as thou profeſſeſt, thou ſhalt bee ſtill the more

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in love with thy profeſſion.

Meditation 29.

Conſideration.

ALl the learned commend Contemplation, Philoſophers, Divines; but give me Conſideration. I find my ſelfe oft in danger, for want not of knowledge, but Conſcience; not of apprehenſion, but reprehenſion: I know that contemplation is a great help to conſideration, as much as wiſedome is to prudence; for that is an act of the one, and this of the other, and they are both compared, one to the Sunne, the other to the Moone; one to the Well, the other to the ſtreame; for prudence doth borrow her light from wiſedome, and her fruitfull

fruitfull ſtreames iſſue from that fountaine; yet like I better for my neceſſity, the pipe which conveyeth the ſtreame unto me, then a conduit which holdeth the water whereof I have no uſe. Contemplation is this conduit, filled up from the well of wiſedome; but Conſideration is the pipe by which prudence in a true levell doth bring this water home to my houſe & uſe; Contemplation is a beame of the underſtanding caſt directly forth, but Conſideration a beame of the underſtanding turned and reflected on it ſelfe; contemplation cleares my underſtanding, Conſideration orders my will; Contemplation makes mee skilfull in the Theorick of goodneſſe, but Conſideration perfect in the Practique of it; Contemplation gives mee eies, Conſideration hands; Contemplation

ſtayeth

ſtayeth it ſelfe within one bare propoſition, This God is good, and here it beholdeth how many waies God is good, of himſelfe originally, in himſelfe eſſentially; in his work, in his word, ſtatutes, judgments, puniſhments, corrections, promiſes, every way, every where good, yea when he ſuffereth us to bee evill; but Conſideration proceedeth farther, to an application, how this doth concerne himſelfe, that I ought to bee good, and to ſeek that good which I want, in him, who is goodneſſe it ſelfe, and concludes with a reſolution, to uſe the meanes which may cauſe mee to be good: Conſideration is the exerciſe of conſcience and reaſon, mutually helping one another, or a conſcience grounded on reaſon, which hath his owne light, or is enlightned from above, or is by teaching,

teaching, or by uſe and experience directed; Conſideration ſetteth before mee things paſt, maketh mee provident for things to come, and plucks mee by the eare, not to neglect things preſent, which it doth by comparing and matching all theſe together; things paſt, with things to come, and conceiving a like forme in both, doth by things already acted, enter into a right courſe of action: Contemplation hath generall grounds of truth, from which many concluſions may more ſpecially bee deduced, but the life of action lies in circumſtances, the ſoule whereof is Conſideration: wherefore contemplation reades mee over a leſſon, which Conſideration doth make mee perfect in, by obſervation, experience, correction: Bleſſedneſſe, which is the perfection of man,

man hath his beginning from Contemplation, but his conſummation in us by Conſideration; for as by that I know God who is the cauſe of cauſes, ſo by this I love God who is the laſt end. The ſoule doth performe ſome actions without diſcourſe, ſo doth it move the body, receive, digeſt, beſtow the meat for nouriſhment, and in thoſe it ſo falls out, becauſe the end is as preſent, as the meanes, namely the life of the body; but thoſe actions which tend unto her owne proper end, or rather of the whole, ſhee doth not produce without diſcourſe, becauſe the meanes are nearer, and the end farther of. Angels for the perfection of their nature, doe all their actions without diſcourſe, but as the Angels herein are above men, ſo man by the priviledge of diſcourſe, above all o-

ther Creatures; for as in a Mill the ſtones know not what thing meale is, nor to what end, neither the wheeles, nor the Water which driveth them about, but the Miller only, which ſets the Mill to worke: ſo none of the Creatures of this world, know their owne worth, or employment, but only man which is Lord over them, and hath not only the uſe of particular objects, but of common notions alſo, and beholding cauſes in their effects, and ayming at a farther, by the next doth ſort convenient means to their proper ends, and all ends to the chiefe end. What a high art is Conſideration, which doth effect ſuch wonderfull things? out of one good, it multiplies many, and makes her advantage of evill; it takes on her the cure of our weakeſt and worſt parts, and addeth

deth both comelineſſe and grace to the beſt: where Conſideration is, all things are done orderly; but they which by chance doe a good without it, doe loſe the commendation of their worke, for want of it; yea of ſuch force is it, that actions not ſpeeding in the end, yet ſet a foot by Conſideration, retaine ſtill the praiſe of vertue; it hath as it were the true touch of that ſtone, whereby Gold is knowne from other metals, for ſo by it wee diſcerne betweene that which is honeſt, profitable, and pleaſing, preferring honeſty to the reſt, as Gold to other metals: it doth cauſe profit and pleaſure, to give place to honeſty, and out of honeſty requites us with true profit and pleaſure; but if profit and pleaſure ſtrive with honeſty to have their curries ſerved firſt, or without it, then

it ſheweth them to be baſe metall, and nothing worth, that ſuch profit is but loſſe, ſuch pleaſure but ſorrow, and that indeed there is nothing either profitable or pleaſant, which agreeth not with honeſty. As they which behold other mens buildings, walke in other mens Parkes, ſolace themſelves in other mens Gardens, make a uſe to themſelves, though the poſſeſſion belong to another: ſo doe we neither heare any thing ſpoken, or ſee any thing done, neither is there any object propoſed unto us, whereof by Conſideration, wee may not make ſome uſe unto our ſelves, though the matter belong to others. And herein is the buſy body faulty, which medling with all kind of matters, doth deſire to be a party in poſſeſſion where he hath nothing to doe, whereas if he had

Conſide-

Conſideration, he might take notice of any mans dealing for his owne uſe, and doe no wrong, for he cannot bee accounted a buſibody, which out of Conſideration obſerveth for his owne uſe, from thoſe things which belong not unto him. Exceſſe of anger or pleaſure is the greateſt enemy to Conſideration, and the promoter of all haſty and forward attempts, which end in ſorrowfull events; but the feare of death, and other miſeries, are leſſened by Conſideration.

Meditation 30.

Subjection.

BEtter well markt, then a whole eare, is the husbandmans Proverb, for the beaſt which

ſtraies away is the ſooner owned, and brought home againe with a marke, but without it loſt; better to be under governnment, then to follow a looſe and lawleſſe life; better to be trained up under the diſcipline of the Church, then to range at liberty, as an *Ethnick*; It was the better for the prodigall youth, that he went out a ſonne, though he returned a ſinner, and hee receives more liberty by his comming home, then he found abroad; his Father knowes him, the houſe receives him, the fat Calfe is provided for him, and all make merry with him. The Church doth exerciſe authority over them, which beare the mark of Chriſt; and if there be cauſe why, it doth correct them according to the quality of their faults; ſometimes by words chiding them, ſometimes by deeds ſuſpending

pending them from the Sacraments, or excommunicating them from the ſociety of the Church; and if the Church perceive that any hath entred through hypocriſy, and is now diſcovered by blaſpheming the truth, which is a caſting off of Chriſts marke, ſuch a one it doth remove by the eternall curſe *Atha Maranatha*; and for ſuch a one indeed had it beene better never to have received that mark, and for thoſe alſo which in the end doe fall from the Church, contemning the order thereof, though not curſed: but they which are the true members of the Church take great profit by thoſe cenſures, for though they fall oft times through humane frailty, yet the Church doth not ceaſe to acknowledge them for her owne, becauſe they beare the marke of Chriſtianity, and taking

a ſpeciall care of them, doth by this diſcipline bring them againe to repentance, and amendment of life, they are converted, they are received, they are confirmed more then before, and the Church is glad of them, as a woman of the child wherewith ſhee hath long travailed; howbeit with them which are without, the Church medleth not, therefore runne they on ſtill in ſinne to their owne perdition, as they which are utterly loſt in the waſte of this world, becauſe they have not the mark of Chriſt; Count it thy greateſt good in this life, that Chriſt hath markt thee for his owne by baptiſme, that thou liveſt under the diſcipline of that Church wherof he is the head, and therefore ſuffer thy ſelfe to be rebuked, privately, openly, and if any greater correction befall thee, humble thy ſelfe,

ſelfe, repent, amend, and this priviledge that thou art markt by Chriſt, ſhall reſtore thee againe to thy former eſtate, and thou ſhalt be his more then before; only beware of hypocriſy, which one day ſhall be diſcovered, and turne not back like a dogge to his vomit, for ſuch have their end worſe then their beginning, and it is better never to have knowne the way of righteouſneſſe, then afterwards to depart from the holy commandement, by a wilfull heart, into which extremity they are at laſt led, which uſe not their moſt honourable profeſſion with a good conſcience; The fall of a ſtarre is fearefull, becauſe high and eminent, and no candle hath ſo ill a ſmack, as that which hath loſt his light.

Meditation 31.

Worlds vanity.

I See nothing in the world, but prophane ſecurity, or baſe weakneſſe, or fruitleſſe labours; prophane ſecurity of them which are the worlds favorites, baſe weakneſſe of them which live in her diſgrace, and fruitleſſe labours of them whoſe hopes and meanes do yet wait on the world, ſtriving hardly to come unto that which they think to attaine; of which ſort, the firſt hold themſelves ſo ſafe as men above the Moone, the ſecond ſo miſerable, that they wiſh no longer to bee, the third bound to doe nothing, but that which they doe, and though they row againſt the ſtreame, and be oft put back by contrary tides,

yet

yet had they rather bee wearied out, then give over; behold, in the first too much confidence in the matters of the world, which they make sure unto themselves, and prove but vaine; in the second an absolute decay of vertue and goodnesse; in the third a wilfull slavery to Vanity. Our Saviour propoſeth the rich chuffe in the Goſpell, as a notable example of prophane ſecurity, who ſaith, Soule thou haſt much goods laid up for many yeares, live at eaſe, eat, drink, and take thy paſtime; to whō God ſaid, Fool, (a ſhrewd terme for great ones) this night will they fetch away thy ſoule from thee, then whoſe ſhall theſe things be wch thou haſt provided? Here is one reaſō why men ſhould not truſt in riches, becauſe the owner may be taken from his wealth. A like example of this ſecurity

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wee have in *Daniel* of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who in the pride of his heart thought his eſtate greater then that it could bee weakned, and hee ſaith, Is not this great *Babel* which I have built, for the houſe of the Kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty? and while he was thus ſpeaking, a voice came from Heaven? Oh King *Nebuchadnezzar*, to thee be it ſpoken, Thy Kingdome is departed from thee: Yea alſo in *Eſther*, how *Haman* comes from the next to the Throne, to the higheſt at the Gallowes: here is another reaſon, why theſe worldly advantages ſhould not cauſe men to be ſecure, becauſe they may be taken from the owner. Of baſe weakneſſe, we have an example in *Achitophell*, who, becauſe he was diſgrac'd at Court, and his counſell not followed,

lowed, went home and hanged himſelfe; in *Achab*, who caſt himſelfe on his bed, and would eat no bread, becauſe *Naboth* denied to ſell him his Vineyard. It befals out that they are ever thus affected about worldly loſſes, which have firſt loſt vertue and honeſty: he that hath unworthily loſt a friend, can comfort himſelfe in his owne fidelity; but theſe men, having ever beene falſe to their owne good, when they are forſaken of worldly goods, have nothing wherin to take comfort; a little of vertue would make them live content, without the favour of the world, and though they might have rich ſtore, yet to deſire rather a moderate uſe of things, then a large poſſeſſion; but loving the graces of the world only, they have not ſought to make themſelves acquainted with Lady vertue, who

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makes her ſelfe knowne to ſuch as eſteeme her. They which give themſelves to the wilfull ſlavery which the world impoſeth on them, by fruitleſſe labours, dayly to be taken for vaine hopes, ſuffer that for their humors ſake, which they doe that are amorous, and taken in ſome fooliſh love or luſt, rather they admire the perſon of the beloved, be ſhee but an odde one amongſt the earthy duſty beauties of humane kind; this is the Idol which they will dayly adore, they put of their cap and ſalute her, as though ſhee were preſent, all their thoughts are ſpent to ſet forth her heavenly beauty, by whatſoever nature hath excellent; if ſhee caſt but a good look on them, it is the higheſt favour that may be; if ſhee frown, they are at deaths dore, and uſe all their poore ſervices to winne

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her againe; no wrong can make them diſlike, no labour weary them in their ſuit; and to ſuch a caſe is the ſilly wretch brought, that to pleaſe his Miſtreſſe, he cares not how long he torments himſelfe: ſuch a Miſtreſſe is the wealth, the glory, the pleaſure of the world, to thoſe that are inamored on it, they ſtand at the Gate with *Abſolon*, and take every man by the hand, and kiſſe him, to gaine the crowne of their deſires. But oh my ſoule, ſeek not the world, but the kingdome of God in Chriſt; if it ſerve thy turne truſt it not, if it frowne on thee, know thou haſt a better maſter.

Medi-

Meditation 32.

The Heart Gods houſe.

WEe will not be contented, exeept wee have elbow roome enough in the world, and perhaps the whole world ſcarſe content many, a private mans wealth muſt ſerve their turne that can goe no farther, and yet in this eſtate, ordinary things are in ſmall requeſt; but what is *Italy* or *Europe* to a victorious ſpirit, but a ſtep over into *Africk*, and from that into *Aſia*; Are not ambition and covetouſneſſe as large, and ſtretch they not their armes as farre as the Sea? yet God reckoneth not ſo much of the greater, but would dwell in the little world, and content himſelfe if he may take but one corner of it,

it,even the heart of man ; men as they aske much of the world, ſo are they willing to beſtow all that they have on it; but they will not part with any thing to God, whereas if they would not deny him this little, hee would give them more then all the world is worth : for why doth he ask the heart, not to forſake it, when he hath wonne the love of it, as the world doth, but to dwell in it for ever? And no doubt ſo great a Lord will make his dwelling very beautifull: Conſider that if the Heaven of Heavens be ſo glorious and bleſſed a place, which yet is but the manſion ordained for his elect, how much more glorious ſhall they be, whom God doth enter into as his owne manſion; and which by reaſon that they are his Image, doe receive a greater glory from him, then the

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materiall Heaven? If thy heart be Gods ancient inheritance, the world is but a diſſeiſor; there be many rivals for thy heart, and they ſeeme all ſo fit, that thou knoweſt not to which to give it firſt, but when God comes, thou art reſolved to deny it, and ſo he have it not, thou doſt not much paſſe who have it, whether it be pleaſure, profit, or ambition; and indeed much like a covetous owner, thou doſt chuſe rather to have thy heart ſtollen from thee, then to beſtow it freely on him who is worthy of it: So got, ſo ſpent; if thou hadſt preſented thy heart to God, he would uſe it as a gift with regard, but thoſe as they have ſtollen it, ſo they abuſe it.

Medi-

Meditation 33.

Separation.

SOme profeſſors which would ſeeme to ſtrive for great parity and perfection of life, have beene much offended at the blemiſhes and wants of thoſe Churches wherein they did live, and have gone ſo farre in this humour, as not to hold theſe aſſemblies for Churches, though otherwiſe having the word ſoundly preached, and Sacraments rightly adminiſtred, wherein they ſaw ſo many hypocrites, and looſe livers, and in the end have made a Separation from their Churches, and ſought unto themſelves new conventicles, as they thought pure and holy; wherein as they did great wrong unto Chriſtian charity

rity and unity, which was not in this cauſe to be broken, ſo found they not that which they ſought for; and ſurely it cannot be, that in this world there ſhould be any viſible Church ſo pure, as they deeame of it, that there ſhould be in it Wheat without Tares, Sheep without Goates; for it is compared to a draw Net, which gathereth Fiſhes of all kindes, and it is a ſociety wherein are men of all ſorts; and no doubt it is the providence of God, which ordereth all things wiſely, that the good, and bad ſhould not live aſunder, parted with great Seas and Mountaines, but mingled one with the other in this life, which maketh much for the bettering of the good, in the exerciſe of vertue, and for the ſtaying of the wicked from all kind of vice; if all the good ſhould live toge-

together, how ſhould their patience, charity, integrity of life, conſtancy in the truth, be exerciſed, or appeare to the glory of God? if the wicked ſhould live all together, what meanes might there be to reclaime them? but as they be now bad, ſo they would dayly grow worſe, one encouraging another, and having none amongſt them, whoſe good examples might reprove them: And therefore the good are to the bad like a piece of leaven, the leaven is the leaſt part, yet it hath a powerfull force to turne the whole lump into his owne quality; ſo are the good very few in reſpect of the bad, yet converſing amongſt them dayly, they draw the world by little and little to their diſpoſition, and make a great alteration in their manners. For ſuch is the power of vertue above vice,

vice, that though vice cannot root out vertue, out of a mind well ſetled, nor doe any hurt at all ſave unto it ſelfe, yet vertue is of ability to drive vice out of that mind, which hath beene long accuſtomed thereunto, and doth good not only to it ſelfe, but to many others, which walk as it were but in the ſhew thereof. Bee men bad, the more need is there that good men ſhould live among them; None have ſo much need of the Phyſitian as thoſe that are ſick: it is reſerved for the Angels in the laſt day, to make a ſeparation betwixt the Sheep and Goates, and not for men, who were redeemed from ſinne and Hell by Chriſt, uncharitably to forſake their weak brethren. But perchance this Separation is, becauſe thoſe wch ſhould execute good lawes are corrupted, or that certaine

certaine ceremonies are retained in the Church, which at other times have beene abuſed unto ſuperſtitious uſes, or in that where the doctrine is condemned as repugnant to the truth, certaine rites of indifferency, tolerated by authority, are not therewithall aboliſhed; But what partiality were this, to hate the good conditions in any man, for the reſt of his bad qualities? and what diſorder would this be in religion, to teach obedience unto Princes, and to reſerve a liberty to our ſelves, of infringing his equall lawes? what breach of charity is this, to offend the conſcience of a weak brother, in denying habits and ceremonies? Suppoſe they be uſed by Idolaters, yet was *Aſa* and other Kings of *Iſrael* commended for pious; neither did the Prophets forſake their Countrey,

trey, or charges, although the high places were not taken away, with the abuſes. Oh my ſoule, diſdaine not the Church for her ſpots, neither be ſo offended at the bad, as to forſake the fellowſhip of the good; looke well into thy ſelfe, and thou ſhalt find more amiſſe there, then thou art aware of at firſt; wherefore beginne to amend thy owne faults, as one of the worſt, and after be as leaven to ſeaſon other: for ſuch as think otherwiſe pity their weakneſſe, and pray for their amendment.

Meditation 34.

Reſolved conſtancy.

WEe may obſerve two men borne in one Towne, brought up under one and

and the ſame maſter, keeping like company, uſing the ſame diet, aire, and exerciſe, to whom all things are as like as may be, yet one of theſe two giving place to his owne appetite, following his owne paſſions, led away by vice, and a looſe kind of life, to wax worſe and worſe, the other obeying reaſon, and framing himſelfe earneſtly after the goodneſſe of his education, to prove better and better, whence is this difference? If from outward cauſes, as Gods providence, the ſtarres, evill ſpirits, or our owne unhappy condition which is paſt all recovery, why are they not both bad, ſeing they are partakers of the ſame nature, of the ſame affections, ſet forward in the ſame kind of education, & continued in the ſame company: the wicked indeed rather then they will acknowledge their own fault,

will impute it to any thing, rather then to themſelves; notwithſtanding, this doth plainly appeare, to be the maine difference, that the one of them is idle, variable, inconſtant, careleſſe, and ſo eaſily carried away with vanity; the other well ſetled, conſtant, reſolute, in his purpoſe and determination, induſtrious, laborious, and ſo overcomming all difficulties, takes courage to go on in the courſe of vertue. The courſe then which good men take, doth depend on their owne godly choiſe of mind, purpoſe, reſolution; and the ill grow worſe and worſe, becauſe they do not wiſh unto themſelves the thing that is good, they doe not purpoſe to be vertuous, but are altogether careleſſe, and uncertaine in their carriage. Marke this yet more plainly, for in this cauſe examples are more

pregnant

pregnant proofes, then demonſtration from reaſons farre fetcht, Have you lived ſometimes in any populous City? there might you have obſerved a world of courſes, which the Citizens follow; ſome going about their owne buſineſſe, ſome attending their neighbours occaſions, ſome going to the Church to heare Sermons, or to be at divine Service, and all theſe are well employed, if they deale honeſtly, pray devoutly, and heare ſubmiſſively; others againe are there idly, walking about the Streets, or dropping into a Tipling houſe, or frequenting the Theatre, or making fraies with them they meet, or drinking and carowſing in Tavernes, or ſporting away the time in gaming places, or ſolliciting their queanes in lewd houſes, and theſe are ill employed. Now if a man ſhould

aske, whence there is ſuch odds betweene the men that live within the ſame Walls, under the ſame Law, and in the ſame time; what may be ſaid more likely and agreable to reaſon, but this, that the better ſort amoved by grace, out of the honeſt choice, purpoſe, and reſolution of their mind, to follow vertue with all diligence, do take theſe commendable courſes, and the worſer ſort addicted to their luſts, and pleaſures, careleſly and idlely beſtow themſelves on all occaſions of ſinne; whence it is, that the good man, though he be many waies hardly tempted to ſinne, by the Devill and wicked men, doth alwaies reſiſt, and becomes the better; but the bad man, having many faire occaſions offered to amend, doth prove the worſe, and lightly aſſaulted, doth yeeld to vice: to

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wiſh our ſelves ſuch as wee ought to be, to deſire vertue and goodneſſe, to purpoſe well, to adde to our purpoſe, care, and induſtry, is not only a beginning, but a going forward, and procureth conſtancy in goodneſſe; If thou wilt not ſo much as wiſh to thy ſelfe, the thing that good is, if thou make not ſpeciall choice therof above Gold, and thine own appetite, how canſt thou labour for it? and if thou wiſh the contrary, how canſt thou not chuſe but hate it? and in this cauſe, who is in fault but thy ſelfe? doe not ill, and ſay, I cannot doe better, but rather I will not change thy purpoſe; adde thy indeavours, heartily beg and deſire for it, and hee which commands will give thee grace to turne and obey.

Meditation 35.

Selfe deceit.

TWo motives there are why men ſinne the more boldly; becauſe it will be longer as they thinke, before they be called to account, and when the account muſt be made amongſt ſo many, what hard matter is it for thee, or one to eſcape ſcot free? Thus uſe they to dally with their owne dangers, which have made ſinne their inheritance, and ſeek ſhifts to avoid ſounder cauſes, wherin they are the leſſe to bee pitied, becauſe they groſſly deceive themſelves; Be it that it is long before we be called to account, yet the length takes it not away, but makes it the more heavy when it comes; wee abuſing the meane time unto ſinne,

ſinne, which God hath granted for our repentance, ſo that wee ſhould rather feare to ſin, becauſe wee ſhall be called to account, then be bold, becauſe of the delay; for look how much ſcope the one giveth to our ſinnes, no leſſe revenge doth the other take, when they are growne to ripeneſſe; and it is indeed as dangerous for the wilfull ſinner, that it is long before there be an account, as that there is one. Now what if that time which men count long, bee very ſhort, to omit that no ſinne is committed, but the conſcience doth call us forthwith to a reckoning, though the act paſſe, yet the guilt is eternally recorded in that booke; as alſo, that the life of man is but ſhort, after which every one hath his particular judgment: and put it over as farre as may be, to that

generall Inquest, and the latter end of the world; what can be long which hath an end, and is alwaies running to that end? when the end is once come, what is all that worth, which past before, whether they be 1000. or 2000. yeares? and what is that continuance worth, which is so full of ends, that every part thereof passeth away, whiles thou hast it? minute after minute, and houres after minutes, daies after houres, monthes after daies, and yeares after moneths, and after some few yeares (which as they begin in a minute, so end they in a minute) perchance not a yeare, not a moneth, not a day, not an houre, in a moment comes death, when most unlooked for. Hast thou spent 7 yeares in sinne? if thou be not a man past all shame, thou art by this time much the sorier.

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Why then ſhould the hope of living ſo much longer make bold againe to ſinne? will not thy ſorrow be doubled, when thou commeſt to fourteen? and what uſe returnes to thee of all theſe fourteen yeares? are they not quite loſt by following ſinne, and thou haſt now more to doe, if ever thou thinke to bee ſaved, then when thou didſt firſt begin to ſay then, I will ſinne, becauſe the time of account is farre of, as if one would ſay, becauſe I have much wealth, I will ſpend all, as though prodigality could find no bottome; He that hath a long time by ſpending it in ſinne, doth barre himſelfe from all time, for if thou continue at all times in thy ſinne, what time can there be betweene ſinne, and the time of account? and if not at firſt, yet at laſt, by a continuall courſe of ſinne, (let

the time of ſinning be never ſo long) ſinne and judgment will come together, and then thou wilt change thy voice, and ſay, Oh this long time is paſt, and the account is at hand, now that there will be much to doe at this time, and where there are ſo many, it is not likely but that ſome may eſcape without their triall; though God doe teach us familiarly as men, by ſuch ordinary matters amongſt us, as wee may beſt underſtand his meaning, as when he ſetteth downe unto us in his word the forme of a judgment, yet muſt wee not tie him to theſe neceſſary circumſtances whereunto mans judgment is ſubject, for he executeth his judgment as God, and not according unto mans weakneſſe, he is not bound to time or place, or examination of witneſſes, all things

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are present before him which shall be our Judge; as every mans conscience doth condemne him, so shall he feele and know the sentence of the Judge, neither shall one prevent or interrupt the other. If thou canst not run from thy owne conscience, how canst thou escape his judgment, who is greater then thy conscience? A sheep may stray from the flock amongst strangers, but he beares a marke which tries him from the rest, and discovers him to the owner; in like manner the conscience hath its mark, which wheresoever thou runne, or thinkest to hide thy selfe, will dog thee back to judgment, and there lay open thy most secret crimes, sins and enormities. But these & the former surmises of thine proceed not so much from ignorance, as infidelity and impiety, and doe sound

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in their true meaning this farre, The day of account will never come, therefore wee may well say, it will bee long in comming, it is impossible there should be such a generall judgment, therefore some must needs escape: This is that bitter root, which springeth up now and then amongst carnall professors; first to sinne, and then to deny God, against whose majesty wee sinne; for if there be a God (which were the greatest blaspemy to think otherwise) there must needs be a judgment, and his judgment cannot be just (which were most wicked to imagine) if he be partiall to any, or not able to punish all: and marke to this purpose the order of Gods workes; first, that is the creation, then there followed the fall of man, after a generall corruption of man, and last of all,

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the deluge and desolation of sinners; the old world is a figure of succeeding ages; the law was published by *Moses*, betweene God and the people, the covenants broken on the peoples part, the punishment of the disobedient to the utter rooting out of that people, and their Temple which was the visible signe of Gods presence amongst them; the law had figures for the time of grace, the law came by *Moses*, so grace and truth is come unto us by *Jesus Christ*, whose Gospell is Preached in all the world, what divisions and strife are risen up about it, as was foretold? how many enemies hath it, which with open force resist it? how many false brethren which undermine it? how many loose libertines which live under the shadow, but will not be ruled by the power of it? how

how doth faith waver, and charity waxe cold; the world ſway, and the Church ſuffer; hereſy proſper, and truth pine? If all the works of God hitherto have had their juſt courſe and time, will he faile, trow yee, in the laſt act? nay ſome part of this act is begunne already, by the comming of Chriſt into the fleſh, for after this comming of him, it is ſaid, He that beleeveth not in the Sonne of God, is condemned already, but the ſecond comming of Chriſt ſhall be a full conſummation; Is he come in humility to ſuffer and ſave, and will he not come in glory to put downe all his enemies? I will not ſay, oh fooliſh and ſlow of heart, that were too mild for ſuch mockers, but oh hard hearted and deſperate wretches, who, becauſe they will not now beleeve the truth of a finall

judgment,

judgment, ſhall hereafter feele the terror and puniſhment of eternall condemnation.

Meditation 36.

Afflictions.

AFflictions are ever profitable to the godly, but there are very few of ſuch, and it is commonly ſeene that men, after a long and ſtrong diſeaſe, are much worſe then before, ſo that the fire of naughtineſſe, which for a while lay covered, under the embers of their diſeaſe, having gotten but a little vent, breaketh forth the more forcibly, and the floud of their corruption ſtopped for a while, by the oppoſition of their paines, having gotten ſome ſmall paſſage, doth recover.

cover his courſe, with the greater violence; It is very true, that in our troubles wee can call our ſelves to account, and pray to God with many vowes and promiſes of amendment, but no ſooner doth he remove his hand, then wee ſtart aſide from our new reſolutions, and follow our old byas: and how commeth this to paſſe? becauſe wee were brought unto it by conſtraint; wee did complaine and cry, but more for feeling of anguiſh and paine, like beaſts, then any inward remorſe, or touch of conſcience; wee were not offended at our ſinnes, but wee are ſorry for the loſſe of our health and liberty; wee humble not our ſelves before the Lord, but it is grievous unto us, that his hand is heavy on us; wee long not after the health of our ſoules, but wee enquire after

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all meanes to remove the diſeaſe from our bodies; therefore as ſoone as wee have our will ſatiſfied, in this reſpect, and feele our ſtrength returne, wee get out as men ſhut up long in Priſon, and forget all the good thoughts which came to us in extremity; and as it fell out with the children of *Iſrael*, that becauſe they were neare the good land, and might have entred into it by the conduct of God, and would not, therefore returned they back againe, and their carcaſſes periſhed in the wilderneſſe: ſo in this cauſe, becauſe wee were neare to amendment of life, and might have beene partakers thereof, through the mercy of God, and would not, therefore fall wee back to our old ſinnes, and in them wee periſh. A godly mind may thrive well in trouble, but he that is not prepa-

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red before hand, ſhall find little comfort in it; the ſunne which melteth the wax, hardneth the clay, ſpices, when they are beaten, ſmell the better, but there are other things, which never ſmell ſo ill, as when they are moſt handled: theſe ſudden flaſhes terrify many, but they enlighten none, but ſuch as live in the inward light. Alas, what an intereſt hath ſinne in us, when wee have once yeelded unto it? wee beare not only the guilt of what is paſt, but wee are ever after the more prone to doe the like againe; So that there is no purgation ſo ſtrong, no Affliction of ſuch force to cleanſe us of it, without the ſpeciall gift of his heavenly grace, which no ſooner ſaid, but *Lazarus* comes forth; Therefore are wee to look to our very beginnings, and if wee have made any

entrance

entrance, to draw back with ſpeed; for ſinnes of cuſtome are like an old Gout, which knowes no remedy; yet deſpaire not at any time, rather reſiſt then give place; if the tempter ſuggeſt unto thee the greatneſſe of thy ſinnes, let it ſerve this way to make thee humble thy ſelfe more, and to aske pardon; if thou deſire heartily to amend, and commit thy cauſe to him which died for thee, thy ſinne cannot hurt thee, for he which giveth the deſire, will bring it to effect; but herein beware of hypocriſy: if God point unto thee particularly by any Affliction, take it as a medicine from thy heavenly Phyſitian, for thy ſoules health, and let it be more diſpleaſing that thou haſt offended God, then that the croſſe is offenſive to thee; ſeek the health of thy ſoule, more then the removing

moving of outward croſſes, and uſe all meanes to be ſuch a one in health, as thou didſt deſire to be in ſickneſſe; in all Afflictions look not ſo much to the rod, as to the ſmiter, who if thou take it patiently doth correct thee in love, if otherwiſe, in anger and indignation.

Meditation 37.

Humane ſociety.

MAn is by nature ſociable, and framed thereunto by reaſon and ſpeech, whereunto he doth the more willingly apply himſelfe, though with ſome particular diſadvantage, becauſe of the neceſſities of life, which ſeeme to require Society; for many commodities neceſſary to life, are had in

in a Society, not otherwiſe to be obtained; this hath drawne men from wandring up and downe to certaine places of abode, from dennes to houſes, from Woods to Townes and Cities, from barbarous manners to civility, and rather to commit themſelves to the authority of an orderly government by Lawes for their ſafety, then to languiſh in an idle and unprofitable looſneſſe, without the uſe of one anothers helpe, and Society: hence have beene erected ſo many States and Common-weales, the glory of all ages: But yet this Society, how agreeable ſoever to mans nature, doth not fully content it, neither doth man find in man that which may ſatisfy his deſire, for man being made after the Image of his maker, doth take more delight to ſee himſelfe in the

the patterne of his firſt beauty, then to ſee his owne face in the face of his brother; and though he need not for this purpoſe the uſe of his eyes ſo much, yet doth the ſoule more perfectly diſcourſe and underſtand, when it lifteth it ſelfe up to God, then when it doth converſe with man. Againe, the happineſſe which wee are to receive in a humane Society, doth proceed from the Society which wee muſt firſt ſeek for with God, and from the duty wee owe unto him, wee rightly learne how to frame our ſelves in all inferiour duties; wherefore as the deſire of Society betweene man and man hath erected States, and Weales publique, ſo the deſire of Society betweene God and man, hath cauſed Churches and holy Aſſemblies, for they are a number of ſuch men which not regarding

regarding the world, or the fashions of it, do desire the acquaintance and familiarity of God, having a speciall care in all their doings, that in nothing they offend his presence, which vouchsafeth to be amongst them as his owne children and friends. Our blessed Saviour knowing how necessary it was for man to recover this Society with God, lost by the fall of our first progenitor *Adam*, and desiring to be the author of so great a good unto us all, did in his owne person ratify the band or league of our reconciliation with God; for being everlastingly God, as the Sonne the second person in the Trinity, he took unto the same our humane nature, and so became both God and man, and one true *Immanuel*, of which nature it is truly said, that the fulnesse of the Godhead dwelleth

dwelleth in it bodily, and all wee which be made bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, are also partakers of this fellowship, not only to dwell with God, and God with us, but also for the nearnesse thereof, to dwell in God and God in us: but wee must remember this still, for a chiefe point in this argument, that wee have no communion nor fellowship with God, but by *Jesus Christ*, and that this loving league and sociable familiarity doth proceed wholly from his incarnation, and in the use of this most singular blessing, doth consist all the happy content which man may reap here in this life, or in that which is to come, I meane if wee converse and keep company with God, as he on the other side doth most lovingly offer himselfe unto us, for this only are wee borne, and this

this is truly to live, and without this, wee are rather ſhadowes then men, or very beaſts in mans ſhape. Oh man, how hath the Lord ennobled thee, didſt thou not debaſe thy ſelfe! he calls thee to be a favorite in his Court, and thou hadſt rather ſhift up and downe, as a baſe peaſant in the Devills countrey; he would make thee a Lord over all things in his right, but thou chooſeſt rather to be a ſlave to the world, ſure of nothing but miſery. It is the chiefeſt commendation of good men, that they walke with God, and the ſhame of the wicked, that they walk with the world: they which converſe with God, are not much addicted to this life, not becauſe they deſpiſe the commodities thereof, but ſeeing they are much abuſed, they are wary how they medle; or looking for better,

they make the leſſe reckoning of them, wherein they take no loſſe, as is ſuppoſed, but procure to themſelves no ſmall advantage: for when it ſo comes to paſſe, that they muſt part with life, they doe it with the greater quietneſſe and comfort of mind, and whereſoever it be that death wait for them, they are the readier for it, which the worldly man is never; and in the meane while none uſe life better then they, or make more account to ſpend it well, but it is rather to draw towards God, then to ſeek any farther acquaintance with the world. But ſome will ſay, the world offereth it ſelfe unto us in every place, but God is farre from us, and ſo ſtrange unto us, that wee know not how to have any acquaintance with him; A ſtrange ſaying indeed of him, which is made

made after Gods Image, and cannot live, or move, or have his being, but in him which is compaſſed about, and cloſed in with his wonderfull workes and dayly benefits, ſo that if he would ſeek, he might by groping eaſily find him, which by reaſon of theſe things, whereby he hath made himſelfe knowne, cannot be farre from us: but this principle of nature is oft times darkned in men by evill cuſtome or wicked malice, and moreover not able of it ſelfe, to bring men forward to this familiarity, or acquaintance with God, and therefore God offereth himſelfe, and the godly walk with him, by other meanes, as by his word, where they find the helpe of his Spirit, by the Sacraments, by prayer, meditation, a godly life; for as by certaine obſequious offices, wee inſinuate our

ſelves into the favour and familiarity of men, ſo theſe are the duties whereby wee living here in this world, are made neare and deare unto God; the pooreſt wretch in the world that walketh with God, which is in his favour, and ſets the Lord before his eyes in all his doings, is happier for the preſent time then the greateſt Monarch on earth, which ſaith as *Pharaoh* did, Who is the Lord? and ſhall hereafter find more happineſſe then all the world could ever beſtow. Moſt unworthy wee which envy the ordinary favours of a Prince unto our brethren, and would come betweene them, and home, if poſſibly wee might, whereas wee might have acceſſe unto God, and ſeek it not, and if wee have it, wee rely not ſo much on it, as they doe on the grace or countenance

of

of a mortall man: What doe not they adventure which are ſo backt? and how many of them ſhrink away, unto whom God doth ſay, I am with thee, I will not faile thee, or forſake thee? I ſpeak out of my owne feeling, let others take the matter as they liſt, I doe ſpecially condemne my ſelfe in thoſe two points, firſt for that I ſeek the Lords moſt loving grace and ſweet acquaintance, with no more heat and zeale: ſecondly, becauſe that when I find it, I am no more thankfull unto God for it, neither am ſo ſtrengthned by it, and go on in Chriſtian duties as I ſhould; The Lord have mercy on mee, and grant mee grace ever to ſee my errours, to confeſſe and repent for them, not pleaſing my ſelfe in any knowne weakneſſe, but alwaies ſtriving to overcome & get out of it.

Meditation 38.

Non-parity of ſinnes.

AS an aptneſſe to laugh or weep, is a property which neceſſarily followes the nature or kind of man, and is affirmed of the whole alwaies, and of his owne right: ſo guilt doth follow ſinne, and makes the ſinner ſubject to the guilt of the Law, which is death. There is then no ſinne ſo light, which of his owne nature doth not deſerve death, or to which a pardon is due of courſe without an infinite ſatisfaction: yet are not all ſinnes equall, for neither doe they offend God alike, nor find the like puniſhment, howbeit by a conſequent to the true Chriſtian all ſinnes are veniall, and to the unbeleever all mortall,

mortall, as they are ever of their owne nature. And it is not amiſſe to obſerve a farther difference, that there is ſinne which beareth the whole ſway in a man; ſuch are the ſinnes of the wicked, and there is ſinne which doth but remaine and dwell in man, becauſe there is a reſiſtance and head made againſt it by the better part, and is at laſt expelled by grace; and thus are the godly and juſt ſubject to ſinne. There is alſo ſinne ſo contrary to the conſcience of the doer, and joyned with ſuch ſtubborneſſe and wilfulneſſe, that it doth utterly waſt & decay the conſcience, killing all ſeed of goodneſſe or godlineſſe, which ſinne cannot ſtand with grace; and there is a ſinne of weakeneſſe or negligence, to which the godly are ſubject, and by which they fall grievouſly; and there is like-

wiſe ſinne in omitting duties required, as alſo in committing things contrary to duty: Now if the queſtion be demanded what ſinne may be admitted or committed moſt ſafely; I anſwer, none, for all are by nature moſt deadly; and if thou be drowned, what ods to thee, whether in the deep Sea, or neare the ſhore? If againe, whether ſome ſinnes be not to be avoyded more then others, I anſwer, thou art to make conſcience of all ſinnes, the ſmall to be hated as much as the great, for the doing of one ſinne is but a downfall unto another, becauſe thou haſt ſtill the leſſe grace to reſiſt, and findeſt in thy ſelfe the greater proneneſſe to yeeld unto the next temptation; yet thou maiſt uſe a ſpeciall caution againſt thoſe wherein thou haſt beene faulty, or which by nature do ſway moſt

with

with thee, or which being little accounted of in the world, are reſerved to Gods judgment, as Saint *Paul* ſaith of whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge them, What will it profit mee, though no mortall man know my faults, or if they know them, take them for none or very ſmall faults, if God at the laſt condemne mee for them? Againe, whether ſinnes of omiſſion be greater then ſinnes of commiſſion, as who ſinneth more, he that ſuffereth a man to die for want of bread, which he could have given him, or he which killeth a man and taketh money from him to ſerve his neceſſity? I hold the ſinnes on both ſides ſo great, that for to ſave thy owne life, and to gaine a world beſides, thou ſhouldeſt not venture to commit one of them: in evils of this nature, there

is no choice, the leaſt is an infinite miſchiefe, and God doth not hate evill more then he loveth goodneſſe, and therefore as thou turneſt thy back from the one, ſo muſt thou chearfully embrace the other; neither can a man well refraine from doing things contrary to duty, except he buſy himſelfe diligently in the parts of his duty; for as nature cannot abide *vacuum*, ſo neither the will of man not be working; and neuters are unto God hatefull of all men. If againe it be demanded, what is to be done after one hath ſinned, if ſinne be deadly? I anſwer thou muſt not deſpaire, as a man utterly loſt, neither give place to ſinne, that it carry thee away, but thou muſt ſtirre up thy ſelfe to a juſt ſorrow for ſinne, ſpecially that thou canſt be no more ſorry or touched then thou

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art: and to this purpoſe it ſhall not be amiſſe to meditate of Gods majeſty, juſtice and ſeverity againſt ſinne, of the grievouſneſſe of thy owne ſinne, and how fooliſhly for ſome vaine trifle, in giving place to thine owne appetite, thou haſt offended him, and when thou feeleſt thy ſelfe thus confounded, it behoveth thee to remember that God is mercifull, and ready to forgive them that repent, yet ſo that thou canſt not be reconciled unto him by any of thy owne merits or ſatisfaction, but only by the death and paſſion of his ſonne Chriſt, in whom thou muſt ſeek pardon and grace to riſe againe.

Medita-

Meditation 39.
Free confeſſion.

ZOpyrus a great Philoſopher, being new come to *Athens*, took on him to know every mans inclination at firſt ſight, one day hee viewed *Socrates* much as he read, and they which ſate by him preſſed him to tell what his opinion was of *Socrates*; he anſwered, I know well that of all men he is the moſt wicked and vile: this tale was forthwith carried to *Socrates* by a Scholler of his, which mocked at the Philoſopher, but *Socrates* cried out, Oh moſt profound Philoſopher, thou haſt found out indeed my inclination, but I have beene altogether drawne from it by Philoſophy; Behold the ingenuity of *Socrates*, he doth not diſſemble his bad diſpoſition,

diſpoſition, but confeſſeth it. The word of God is that Philoſophy which not looking on the outward lineaments of the body, ſaith this or that man is ill inclined, but which diſcerning and trying the heart and reines, judgeth all men naught, and ſaith of us, when it tels us what wee are from *Adam*, that wee are borne in ſinne, that wee are prone to all ſinne, and doe nothing but ſinne greedily, and continually from our cradle to our coffin: Now where is there that *Socrates* amongſt us Chriſtians, that in ſuch a cauſe doth freely confeſſe his naughtineſſe? that wee doe not, it is manifeſt, becauſe wee ſeek not for grace, which might heale the corruption that lieth hid in us: *Socrates* knew his naughty diſpoſition before he was told of it, and provided forth-

forthwith a remedy to alter it, but wee have no reſpect of the one or the other; I had rather be *Socrates* ſtriving againſt my ill inclination, then a lewd Chriſtian arrogating goodneſſe to my ſelfe, which I have not, or not ſeeking grace, which I want.

Meditation 40.

Ignorant teachers, and ill hearers.

THe diſcourſes of ſome Teachers are like a Labyrinth, they make their entry plaine, briefe, eaſy; but after they have gotten their auditors in, they lead them on through ſuch by matters, as queſtions, doubts, reſolutions, concluſions, quotations, illuſtrations, digreſſions, tranſitions, that the poore Auditor

ditor is quite loſt, for neither knowes he whence he came, nor where he is, nor how he may get out againe. I cannot blame any true Univerſity man for this fault, but thoſe which came thither to ſteale other mens labours, and fled away by night; for heare you, ſuch a one his clothes are not more ſutable to his profeſſion, then his Sermon to his text, and if he find his auditor a Sceptick, he makes him an Academick; if an Epicure, he makes him a Stoick; if an Infant, he makes him a Man; ſo doth God alwaies bleſſe good meanes, and they thrive not ſo well which take the Plough in hand, and are not acquainted with that kind of Husbandry; Such a man is the moſt neceſſary of all others for his uſe, and ought to bee the moſt excellent amongſt men for his gifts, gravity,

vity, ſanctity, integrity, divinity, affability, diſcourſe, that when men behold him, they may ſee a ſecond *Samuel* comming downe from the Lords Mount; and they are to be commended which provide for them honour and maintenance. I ſee that all auditors popular, mixt or pure, deſire to have a wiſe and eloquent ſpeaker, wherein they are ſo curious of their choice, that amongſt many ſcarce any hath that happineſſe to pleaſe the major part: but as for the auditors themſelves they never reckon in what manner they heare, and though they beare away very little, yet they think it enough if they can give this report, The man ſpake well, and to the purpoſe; whereas in the courſe and order of theſe things, it is as neceſſary there ſhould be a judicious and diſcreet hearer, as a wiſe

wiſe and learned ſpeaker; for to what end is ſeed caſt into the ground, if the ſoile be not apt to receive it? weeds may choak, and a barren ground yeelds bad increaſe; So to what end are words committed to thoſe eares, which by reaſon of troubles and other affections can make no uſe of them? It hath beene obſerved of our time, that wee have much Preaching and little knowledge, and yet more knowledge then conſcience; much teaching and little faith, and yet more faith then charity: the fault perhaps is not in the matter or manner of Preaching, but unſufficiency of hearing, whereas if wee had every of us as great care to be good hearers, as to meet with good Preachers, it would be ſooner remedied; for a well prepared hearer may profit by a teacher of meane

meane gifts, and yet *Paul* himſelfe cannot profit a bad hearer; Let us not therefore thinke that the whole efficacy of Preaching doth depend on the ability of the Preacher, for beſides that God hath his ordinary bleſſing going forth with his word, It is given unto you to know the myſteries of the kingdome of Heaven, they that come with true hearts provide eares which are more fruitfull then others by a hundred fold; and as there is an art of ſpeaking, ſo alſo is there an art of hearing, wherefore take heed how you heare; and howſoever let Miniſters be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, which if they be dumb or idle, they cannot doe.

Medi-

Meditation 41.

Greatneſſe ſubject to flattery.

ALl praiſe the rich man to the skies, yet none of theſe praiſes are his owne, for either it is his Prince which doth grace him, or his houſe which is deſcended unto him; his ſtately buildings which others have plotted and perfected for him; or his goodly furniture which money hath procured; or his long traine and attendance which the world lends him; or his parkes, ponds, paſtures, mannors, walkes; all which though they be parcell of his riches, yet are they no part of the man, neither abide they long with him without change: but who almoſt dares praiſe a good man? yet all his praiſes are meerly

meerly his owne and within him, and when thou praiſeſt a man for his honeſty, who can deny but that thou praiſeſt the man for himſelfe? yet loath wee are to praiſe a man for honeſty without the acceſſe of authority, wealth, honour, and rather theſe without the other; therefore I ſay that rich men have about them more flatterers then friends, yea in the abundance of all things they want ſome to tell them the truth. When wee heare praiſes, wee ſhould ſuſpect them not to bee ours, but ſome matter of circumſtance; when wee heare reprehenſion, let us make account of it, as our owne, for either it is a fault or may be; and in this cauſe it is better with the good, then with the rich, for the good have many about them, which will rather ſlander, then want matter to lay againſt

againſt them; they will rather ſpite them with deeds, then ſmooth them with gloſing ſpeches; back-bite, rather then beare with them; pick quarrels, rather then live at peace with them; which croſſing courſe of theirs, makes the good better, it cauſeth them all the while to look more warily to themſelves; but the rich man is taken in the flatterers net like a Larke, whiles he playeth with the glaſſe of vaine glory.

Meditation 42.

Content.

ABſolute Content to which no degree of perfection can be added, is in God only, who hath it everlaſtingly in himſelfe, of himſelfe, for himſelfe, and is not

not any thing diſtinct from him, but his nature and eſſence: There is a Content qualified according to the ſtate and degree of the creature, as in Angels and men, who have reaſon to know, and will to deſire, and meanes to be poſſeſſed of their good, whence this content doth grow; ſo that this Content is not ſo in the creature, but that he muſt ſeek it elſewhere, it is not ſo of him, but that he muſt be beholding to a higher cauſe; it is not ſo for him, that he ſhould reſt there, but be moved thereby to glorify God; it is not ſo one with him, but that there is great ods betweene them. Content as it is in man may be ſaid to be true or falſe, the falſe is but a picture or counterfeit of Content without the thing, without life, proceeding from the enjoying of good which

ſeemes

ſeemes ſo, but is not, either becauſe it is abuſed, or is in his owne nature evill: and they which have this Content are alwaies miſerable, becauſe of falſe opinions, which blind reaſon, and unruly affections ſuggeſt unto them, and therewith ſo pervert their will, that they are not long of one judgment or reſolution, but like a troubled and running ſtreame, in which may be ſeene no conſtant image of Content; and this notwithſtanding is the only Content which moſt part of men doe finde, and therefore at laſt when they think to be moſt at eaſe, they grow weary of themſelves, and all things elſe, ſhewing well by their labours and paines taking, that they did much deſire the true Content, but tooke not a right courſe for it. The true Content therefore, is a calmneſſe or quiet-

quietneſſe of the ſoule, reſting and ſetling it ſelfe on true good, and is either begun or increaſing, as in good men, whiles they live; or conſummate, and full, as when they goe hence to that other life: for men which receive Content, receive it not all at one time, but by certaine degrees of growth, and as is the ſpring of vertue, ſo of Content. Neither have they it ſo, that this clearneſſe and calmneſſe is alwaies in them alike; for as long as they live they ſhall find alteration; but in the other life, nothing ſhall trouble their Content as evill, and offences ſhall be taken away: for they ſhall receive the full meaſure of every part of their Content, and that without mixture of any object which might procure diſcontent: here there is ſinne remayning, and miſeries which follow the condition

tion of ſinners, but there they that come ſhall leave ſinne, and miſery behind them: here there are but few Sabbaths in reſpect of the common daies, there it is a continuall Sabbath, in which freed from all neceſſities which this life requireth, wee ſhall wholly beſtow our ſelves on our chiefe good, and this chiefe good ſhall be beſtowed on us, and hence will ſpring out unto us living and over-running ſtreames of content: The content which doth begin and increaſe with good men while they live, may be ſaid to be particular, or generall; the particular proceedeth from the particular fruition of divers good things, as they are ſucceſſively attained, and do every one tend to generall content, which is cauſed from the fruition of happineſſe it

ſelfe, ſuch as may man obtaine in this life; that is, when all the cauſes of content meet, and are knit together, though in a meaner degree, and with imperfection, whereas that which wee call conſummate in the life to come, is in his higheſt degree, and without this imperfection. Content, as it proceeds from a comfortable uſe of particular things, is either in reſpect of things, tending to the being of life, or to the well: being, and they which tend to the being of life, are of two ſorts, ſome without which life cannot be, as dirt and apparell; others, without which it cannot be elſe ſo liberally and worthily maintained, as riches, friends, dignities, and degrees of life: and they which tend to wel being, are alſo of two ſorts, ſome which are but meere helpes, as arts and ſciences; ſome which

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are the well being it ſelfe of life, as wiſedome, prudence, morall vertues; for in all theſe things, as there is a good in reſpect of the giver, and the end for which hee gives them, ſo out of them particularly there doth ariſe a particular, and generally a more generall content, and therefore both theſe may be conſidered againe as outward or inward content; the outward is that which commeth from externall things, and yet no falſe content, though they be common both to good men and bad. And though I ſaid before that falſe content is that which proceedeth from things ſeeming good, and are not, for they are indifferent, and have their name from the uſe; to them that uſe them well they are good, but elſe not ſo: and as flowers, or fruit, which otherwiſe would corrupt,

are preſerved in ſugar, ſo thoſe outward things, which otherwiſe might prove to be evill, are preſerved in goodneſſe by the ſweetneſſe, and ſtrength of vertue. This then is the difference betweene the content which groweth from inward, and outward things, that outward things are not content in it ſelfe, but as referred to the inward, and inward things are content unto it ſelfe without the outward. There be two things which helpe the good in the uſe of outward things; firſt, they have a right judgement of them, to know that they are not ſimply good, or neceſſary, but indifferent: and ſecondly, they are indifferently diſpoſed towards them, to have them, or to be without them; when they have them, they are content with them as they have them, becauſe of the good uſe which

which is to be made of them; and when they have them not, they are contented to have uſed them well, and to be no more buſied with them, as ſetting their minds on the better things, and without this equability of mind there is no content to be had in outward things: the inward content is from the true knowledge of God, the feeling of his favour, and the teſtimony of a good conſcience, that wee heartily deſire in all our life to obey him, and this workes a wonderfull content, when as the heart loving God, and deſiring him, doth feele it ſelfe beloved againe of God, yea loved firſt, and before he himſelfe did know how to love God, and whence all his love and duty doth grow. But here it may perhaps be ſaid, that they which ſerve God have the leaſt content of all men, for the

world is againſt them, and they aga inſt the world; and as for theſe things, wherein doth conſiſt their chiefe content, if wee ſhall beleeve them, they complaine they want much, and have very little as the Prophet *David*, where hee ſaith, *As the Hart panteth for the rivers of water, ſo panteth my ſoule after thee O God.* What content might that ſoule have which was ſo emptied with neede, and ſo ſtretched out in deſire, and lived in expectation of the good it had not? From that antipathy which is betweene the world and Gods ſervants, doth ariſe their chiefeſt content, for inſtead of the world they have God to be their ſteward and provider; and the godly ſoule, which having taſted of the ſweetneſſe of Gods mercy, findeth unſpeakeable content therein, and thirſteth to drinke more yet without

out diſcontent, though not without deſire, and this humility and vehement appetite in the children of God maketh their content the greater. Thinke what a wretch thou art, and moſt unworthy of that content, thou oft feeleſt that thy content is choaked by turning thy deſires after vanity, or ſinne, which are the poyſon of content, labour by obedience and patience in the end to attaine full content, in the meane ſpace be not out of heart, if many times thou have it not, for God will try thee by all meanes; ſeeke content in the beſt things, elſe thou wilt loſe it in all.

Medi-

Meditation 42.

Malice, and Pride.

THe worke of ſinne is an imitation of the devill, but there are two, which practiſed by men, do make them in a ſhort time as cunning as their crafts-maſter, and to turne as right after him, as any child can after his father, they are Malice, and Pride: the devils malice is ſo great towards God, though his Lord, that there can be nothing more hatefull unto him, than to be obedient to his will, whoſe ſervice wee count perfect freedome, and doth for this cauſe what in him lyes, that the holy and juſt lawes of God ſhould be held of no force, no authority, by breaking them himſelfe, and cauſing others ſo to do, and by maintain-

maintaining lawes of his own, repugnant to Gods, as Idolatry, Magicke, and the like: and ſo much doth hee pleaſe himſelfe in this courſe, that hee counteth himſelfe, and his followers for this doing better and more noble than other creatures, as Angels and men, which continue in obedience, whom hee eſteemes but as baſe ſlaves; for that as hee ſaith, they conſent to live in ſuch a bondage, whereas living as hee doth under no command, they might at leaſt be Gods themſelves in conceit: and therefore againſt all ſuch (for the malice hee beares to God, and obedience to him) hee bendeth all his force and ſleights; if he cannot winne them, hee will weary them: and hee boaſteth that hee hath more to follow his command, than God hath. And there is nothing that doth vexe him more,

and indeed it is his hell, that when hee hath moſt deeply plotted, and diligently practiſed, to bring to paſſe a miſchiefe to the diſhonour of God, or the hurt of his ſervants, hee perceiveth himſelfe in the end to come ſhort of his purpoſes, becauſe the goodneſſe of God, by infinite wiſdome, power, and mercy, doth overreach the depth of his malice, uſing him onely to diſcover his owne naughtineſſe, but turning the buſineſſe to his owne glory, and the good of his ſervants, and leaving him at laſt unto his ſhame, as in the fall of *Adam*, affliction of *Job*, and the paſſion of our Saviour: this makes him to eate, and teare himſelfe, that hee ſhould be but an inſtrument, which would be counted a maſter of the worke, and in all theſe appeareth his malice, his pride is ſo great, that though

though hee know himſelfe to be over-ruled by Gods power, and cannot go beyond the length of his chaine, though hee ſuffer extreme puniſhment for his rebellion; as ſeparation from the divine preſence, and horror; and though hee knowes God is very mercifull, yet diſdaines hee to aske pardon for his offences, or be beholding unto him for his mercy, but doth ſtill repine, and grind the teeth againſt God, as though hee did him great wrong; Now how like unto him are men in theſe points, which loving the faults they do commit, hate the lawes which they breake, and cannot abide any order or ſtate under God, which hindereth their wicked deſignments, counting themſelves better, and more noble than others, becauſe they deſpiſe lawfull authority, diſgracing them that be good,

and

and having no goodneſſe do boaſt of ſtrength, that the ſway of the world is on their ſide, which ſcorn to acknowledge their faults, and thinke ſo well of themſelves, as though they needed not to have any favour, which are as reſolute in their evill purpoſes, as though they had made a covenant with death, and league with hell, ſaying they had rather goe to hell with good fellowes, than live with ſuch peeviſh profeſſors as know not how to laugh and be merry. Our bleſſed Saviour, the eternall Word, which was in the fulneſſe of time made fleſh, which dwelled amongſt us, and wee ſaw his glory, as the glory of the onely begotten Sonne of God, full of grace and truth, as hee paid the price of our redemption by his death, ſo hee left his life going before as an example to reforme us to the image

image of God decayed in us by ſinne: and amongſt all his excellent vertues, wee are ſpecially to imitate theſe two which are oppoſite to the devils malice and pride, his charity and humility; his charity ſo great towards his heavenly Father, and us men, that becauſe his Father would have it ſo, and our miſery might by this meanes be done away, hee became obedient thus farre, not onely to live amongſt us a meane man, and to endure our neceſſities, but alſo to ſuffer a moſt painfull and ſhamefull death for us, and to beare all our ſorrowes: and ſo much he loveth obedience, that he accounteth all them his brethren, which live in it, and for them hath prepared his grace and glory; yea hee rejoyceth in a little flocke, which heareth his voyce, and breaketh the nations in pieces with a rod

of,

of iron like a potters veſſell, which breake his bonds, and caſt his cords from them: his humility ſo great, that though there was never ſinne, or the leaſt ſpot of uncleanneſſe, which did cleave to him, yet he became our ſurety, taking on himſelfe our ſins, and in our perſon doth acknowledge himſelfe a grievous ſinner, and doth aske pardon, and receive mercy for us to the forgiveneſſe of all our ſinnes, teaching us evermore to confeſſe our ſinnes unto God, and to ſeeke for grace, and favour by him, who is both willing, and able to grant whatſoever wee need, and if wee aske in faith, no good thing will hee deny unto us; and let the devill rage with his malice and pride, let him ſet all his deviſes and inſtruments on worke to confound us, if God be on our ſide, we care not who be againſt us.

Medi-

Meditation 43.

Mortification.

OUr life muſt be a continuall meditation of death, ſo the Philoſopher; but the Chriſtians life is no other than a continuall death, and that by the example of his Lord, whoſe whole life was nothing elſe but a preparation to death; and all they which are heires of promiſe with Chriſt, have the title on this condition, that their lives be made conformable unto his death, that whoſoever looketh on them may ſee the image of Chriſt dying in them; neither may they looke to come otherwiſe unto his life, than by dying firſt, which is not either the firſt, or ſecond death, ſpoken of by Saint *John* in his Revelation,

tion, when a man liveth in this world without grace in ſinne, or elſe ſuffereth elſewhere eternall puniſhment for ſinne; but in a daily dying, as the Chriſtian ought, we ſhall avoid both theſe, and be made partakers of the firſt reſurrection here, and of the ſecond in the life to come. The continuall death of a Chriſtian is that which in the Scripture is called mortification, which maketh us conformable in all our life to the death of Chriſt; for as Chriſt died to deliver us from the guilt of ſin, & to bring us to God, ſo the Chriſtian dyeth in himſelfe as the child of *Adam*, that ſinne may have no power over him, but that hee may be led by grace to doe all things to the glory of God: and this death is firſt inwardly, and is called a crucifying the old man, the fleſh, with the affections and luſts thereof,

thereof, the law of the members, which rebell againſt the ſpirit, the unregenerate part, this muſt wee kill and ſacrifice, and in this reſpect a Chriſtian muſt daily die; for though he doe every day what hee can to deſtroy ſinne, hee ſhall find new monſters ſpring up out of thoſe heades, which hee hath cut off, which will procure him more labour. *Paul* ſaith, indeed they that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh with the luſts and affections thereof, yet meaneth hee not that the fleſh is utterly dead in any, but that they keepe it ſo under awe, and maſter it, that it dyeth in them daily: likewiſe hee ſaith, they that live in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God, for in this part the Chriſtian muſt be ſtill dying, that the ſpirit may live in him; though a man die, yet a conſtant man will be loath to deny himſelfe,

himſelfe: Ttherefore this kind of mortification ſeemeth worſe than death, wee muſt deny our owne will, our owne affections, our owne reaſon, we muſt be no greater adverſaries to any than we are to our ſelves, wee muſt rebuke our ſelves, wee muſt barre our ſelves; of many faire occaſions of much liberty, we muſt puniſh our ſelves, this crucifying conſiſteth in a ſearch, and knowledge of our ſinnes; wee muſt not ſmother our ſinnes, or ſooth up our ſelves, but call a ſpade a ſpade, we muſt be alſo ſorry for our ſinnes, as ſorry as ever we have beene for ſickneſſe, ſhame, or loſſe that ever lighted on us; ſo ſorry, that nothing elſe be ſo ſorrowfull unto us; laſtly we muſt hate ſinne, and caſt it out as it were a ſerpent crept into our boſome, and ſpet on it, as wee would ſpet on a foule toade. The

ſecond

ſecond kind of mortification is outward, is a ſubmitting of our ſelves to dangers, griefes, and loſſes, as poverty, paine, diſgrace, wrong for Chriſts ſake, and needs much patience, for wee muſt have death ſtill before our eyes, and all deadly things; this hath beene the portion of the Church at all times, Wee are killed all the day long, and are counted but ſheepe for the ſlaughter, ſaith the Pſalmiſt: and Saint *Paul* tels the *Corinthians* that he dies daily, *I dye daily*, be his owne words; againe in the Acts to the brethren, *What doe yee weeping, and breaking my heart? for I am ready not onely to be bound, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus.* And in another place the ſame Apoſtle, *I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in anguiſh for Chriſts ſake.* Saint

Paul

Paul is a notable example unto us of this kind: and if thus wee dye dayly as Chriſtians, wee ſhall never be afraid to dye as men, wee ſhall be ever ready for death, and ſo farre from ſhrinking backe, that wee ſhall boldly meet it, it ſhall be no loſſe, but gaine unto us; no end of life, but the beginning of a better; while wee fly death we runne into ſinne headlong, yet is there no death ſo bad. Oh that wee could once truely learne to dye, that we might live for ever! Many are dead, which thinke themſelves alive. Many to avoid a temporall death, do loſe thoſe things without which life is nothing worth; the parting of the ſoule from the body is no death, but the parting of God from the ſoule: if the body without breath be but a carcaſſe, what is a Chriſtian without grace, but a painted tombe? Our

firſt birth is the death of that life which the infant drawes from his mother, and the body is borne into the world for ſenſe and growth: by our ſecond birth, which is the death of the body, the ſoule is borne into the kingdome of heaven to live a new life from the body, for there it underſtands without phantaſie or common ſenſe, it ſeeth without eyes, heareth without eares, maketh it ſelfe underſtood without ſpeech. And as the birth of the body into the world is a better life, than that which the Infant had in his mothers wombe, ſo muſt the birth of the ſoule into heaven be a better life, than that of the body, by how much the faculties of the ſoule are more excellent, than the bodily ſenſes. In our mothers wombe we lived as plants, in the world wee lived as men, in hea-

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ven wee ſhall live as the Angels; neither are ſoule and body parted ſo as they ſhall never meet againe, for the body no doubt doth naturally long for the ſoule, and the ſoule beareth a love to the body. Therefore by a holy ordinance of the Lord, they abide one anothers abſence for a while, that they may come together againe as man and wife, with the greater comfort; the body is gone downe into the grave, to leave there his ſhame of mortality, of weakeneſſe, of corruption, neceſſity, without all which, after the reſurrection it ſhall returne to the ſoule, and the ſoule trimmed and tricked up in glory, like a freſh ſpouſe, ſhall receive the body into the ſame glory, and both ſhall be received into God, and dwell with him for ever. Death then is called ſo, onely as it doth appeare unto us, and

others

others which live here, but in very deed, and by the benefit of Chriſt, the ſtate of the dead is the very true life everlaſting; neither is the birth of the child a greater hope of life in the world, than is this of the ſoule, in the death of the body, of the life both of body and ſoule, to be glorified in the kingdome of heaven: Many think on death to be more vicious, as Epicures, *Let us eate and drinke, for to morrow wee ſhall dye*: ſome will not thinke at all on death, and they live neither the longer, nor the better, but are ſure to die much the worſe. When wee thinke on death which are Chriſtians, it ſhould make us live very juſtly, and ſoberly, becauſe wee looke for a Kingdome after death, where none enter but the righteous. Oh my ſoule and body, if wee muſt needs part, how ſoone wee know not,

not, let us do it willingly, to overcome neceſſity reſiſtance is vaine, obedience is profitable, let us provide for that which elſe will prevent us; let us make uſe of death, as ſome do of money, which elſe lyes dead, let us die in the Lord, to the Lord, this is the beſt advantage.

Meditation 44.

Laſt Judgement.

WEe cannot avoide either judgment or death, when ſickneſſe ſummons us to the one, doth not our conſcience to the other? and in this life God hath his tryalls, judgements, executions, ſo that men of times are forced to cry out, *Juſtus es Domine, & juſta ſunt judicia tua*: but becauſe the wicked obſerve them not, and God

God doth desire to appeare unto men rather, as a mercifull father, than a severe Judge; therefore the Majesty, the Authority, the severity of his judgment is hid unto us so farre that wee are bound to beleeve that he will come to judge a thing which else we would never dream of. Though then we see no examples of this judgement as yet, neither can conceive the form therof, yet do wee beleeve it, and that there is a certaine time appointed for it; they that looke not for it with joy, shall abide it with sorrow; that is, that last and finall judgement, wherein all causes shall be opened, all persons censured, all workes rewarded; what hath hitherto beene suspended, shall now be sentenced, and never more altered: Marke the preparation unto it, the heavens shall passe away with noyse, the elements

ſhall melt with fervent heat, the ſea ſhall be dried up, and the earth ſhall be burnt, with all her workes; then a ſummoning trumpet ſhall ſound and awake up all thoſe, that ſleepe in the ſilence of death, and they together with the living ſhall be caught up; then ſhall the Judge appeare viſibly above in flaming fire, compaſſed about with infinite thouſands of Angels, ready to do his will. A ſtrange judgement towards, no doubt, whether we reſpect the Judge, or the parties which are to make their appearance, or the ſentence it ſelfe: the wiſdome of the Judge is ſuch, that hee cannot be deceived, hee knoweth all cauſes without information, things paſt are to him preſent, and things to come, hee made mans heart, and findeth out every corner, and turning thereof, hee heares our words before wee

ſpeake

ſpeake them, and knowes our thoughts before wee act them, we do not will without his power, though without his allowance, nor worke without his privity, though without his conſent; nay, he knowes our purpoſes, before wee are fully reſolved, and our thoughts before wee conceive them; and our workes without producing any witneſſe: his juſtice is ſuch, that he cannot pervert judgment for favour or bribes: his will is the rule of all righteouſneſſe, and therefore hee can favour no cauſe, but that which is right, and if hee could be unrighteous, what bribe might winne him which wanteth nothing? his power is ſuch that all muſt abide his decree; here lyes no appeale, no prohibition can be granted againſtit, no pardon obtained: his ;ealouſie ſhall take on harneſſe,

and hee ſhall arme the creature to be avenged of his enemies, hee ſhall put on righteouſneſſe for a breaſt-plate, and take unfained judgement inſtead of an helmet, equity ſhall be his ſhield, and his fierce wrath as a ſharpe ſword, and his troop are the whole compaſſe of the world. Now what are the parties which are to appeare, and abide tryall? *Adam* and his poſterity from the firſt man to the laſt that ſhall be borne; here ſhall they be judged which have beene heretofore Judges, and they ſhall receive right, which would not doe right; Princes, and Popes which none did dare to call in queſtion, ſhall be here both examined, and cenſured; and the more mighty men have beene to do wrong, the more mightily ſhall they be confounded. Laſtly, the ſentence is very ſhort, *Come yee bleſſed: Goe yee curſed:*

curſed: but of the greateſt weight and ſtrength that ever was, for this doth not paſſe on one man, or a family, or a Nation onely, but on all mankind at one time: neither is it touching goods and lands, or credit, or limme, or life of the body, but it doth concerne bodies, and ſoules too, for ſalvation, or damnation, and that not for a day or yeare to continue, but for ever without any repealing: And are theſe things ſo, what manner of perſons ought wee to be then in holy converſation, and godlineſſe, looking for, and haſting to the comming of the day of God? for theſe things muſt ſo come to paſſe, not to feare, or trouble Gods children, but to take revenge on his enemies: As when ſome mighty Prince commeth towards a Caſtle of his beſieged by the enemy, and bringeth a great army

with him to raiſe the ſiege, this putteth them in no feare which are within, but is to them a great comfort, and therefore they looke over the walls, and rejoyce at it with ſhouts and cryes, but they which are without are perplexed with feare for the hurt which is neare unto them: know yee not that to the worlds end the Church is beſieged by the devill, the world, and the fleſh? then God will come to raiſe this ſiege, and bring all his enemies under his feete, and his comming is not to put them in feare which are within his Church, but which aſſault it, and therefore Chriſt ſaid to his owne, *Lift up your heads for your ſalvation draweth nigh*: and in another place he ſaith, *Behold I come ſhortly, and my reward is with me*, to give every man according to his worke; Bleſſed are they that do his Comman-

Commandements, that their right may be in the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City; for without ſhall be dogges, and enchanters, and whoremongers, and murtherers, and Idolaters, and whoſoever loveth or maketh lies.

Meditation 45.

Hell.

A Thought of Hell is ſad, not ſo ſad as to feele the paine, and they ſhall certainly feele it which thinke not oft on it, and that ſadly too; make thy choyce, if thou like mine, goe forward with mee, it is a puniſhment which ſhuts us out from the preſence of God, that is a loſſe of all good, it is a paine of griefe in all parts of

man according as their diſpoſition is to take griefe, eaſeleſſe, that's the extremity; comfortleſſe, it findes no pity; endleſſe, it hath no remedy; it is called the ſecond death, a worme of the conſcience, a bottomleſſe pit, utter darkneſſe, fire unquenchable, a river of brimſtone which is kindled by the breath of the Lord of Hoaſtes; there is no order but confuſion, weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth; Wilt know where it is, how ſpatious the rage of the tormentors, the fury of the torments, the diſpaire of the tormented? God keepe thee and mee from this experience. But is God ſo infinitely angry? will hee ſo unmercifully forſake? ſo hardly handle theſe? which might have knowne and loved him, had hee ſo liſted, and can never do him hurt though they would. Diſpute not vaine clay,

clay, thou art in the Potters hand to deale with thee as hee pleaſeth, his judgements are too high for thee, beleeve his word, obey thy calling, follow him which deſcended into hell to fetch thy condemnation thence, and thou ſhalt find God mercifull to thy ſoule, yea nothing but mercy, and in this cauſe I put thee over for a concluſion of all to the meditation of Heaven.

Meditation 46.

Heaven, and the heavenly inheritance.

THis is not meate for all mouthes; art thou truly humbled for thy ſinnes, perſecuted for the truth, oppreſſed in thy right? doſt thou hate the world, and art thou prepared for death,

then art thou a Gomer fit to keepe this Manna without corrupting, but thou muſt beleeve, elſe ſhalt thou not underſtand, for moſt true is that which the Apoſtle ſaith, We walke by faith, and not by ſight, the things which are ſeene are temporall, but the things which are not ſeene are eternall; and as Saint *John* ſaith, *Now are wee the ſonnes of God, but yet it doth not appeare what wee ſhall be, and wee know that when hee ſhall appeare, wee ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*. If a King can do ſo much, what trow you will the King of Kings do for that man which hee meanes to honor? he hath already given his Son for thee, and by him forgiven thy ſinnes, he hath given unto thee the priviledg of thy calling, the honour of thy profeſſion, the liberty of thy conſcience, the helpes of his Sacraments, the uſe

of

of his Word, the communion of Saints, the counſell of the wiſe, the familiarity of the good, the beginnings of regeneration, the proceedings of faith, hope, and love, the fruits of patience, peace, joy, and conſcionable dealing; laſt of all, that great prerogative, the interceſſion of Chriſt in all thy prayers; if he have done ſo much for thee in this pilgrimage, what will hee do for thee in thy country? if thou have had ſuch benefits in the wilderneſſe, what art thou to hope for in Canaan? The eye hath not ſeene, the heart of man is not able to conceive, how then can the tongue utter them? but beleeve thou in thy ſoule, which loves God, the things which he hath provided for them that love him; this world was made without any proviſion, what a world will that be which

which God doth provide ſo long before hand? and hee tels thee hee hath provided it, that thou mightſt know thou canſt not be deceived; before we have it, we have the earneſt of it, and when wee have it, nothing can take it from us: ſo that there is preſently an immunity from evill, and a ſecurity never to returne to evill, and there is alſo plenty, and community; we enjoy all good, yea God himſelfe the well of goodneſſe, therefore wee live ſtill, but what wee were is a ſhadow to what we are, yea the beſt we were is almoſt nothing to that we are; wee were in grace, wee are in glory, wee live ſtill, but more in God than in our ſelves, we rejoyce as much for others as for our ſelves, we are not onely reformed in bodies, and ſoules, but alſo transformed into a divine nature, as the Angels free from

from neceſſities, as Chriſt highly favoured in Chriſt, as God eternallnally bleſſed; ſuch is the heavenly inheritance of the Saints, which although it be common to many, yet every one of the family hath his proper right in it, and though it be divided, yet is not the propriety of any the leſſe, or the communion the weaker, for every one is fully content with his part, and doth rejoyce as much in the good of others, as his owne, and they do all drinke of the ſame well of eternall life. Landed men deſire to have perfect ſurveyes, and true plots of their States of inheritance, willing not onely to ſatiſfie their minds touching the value, but alſo their eyes, beholding under one aſpect, the houſes, courtelages, wayes, walkes, ponds, parkes, woods, coppize, hills, bottomes, arable grounds, meadowes,

dowes, and paſture, and they would have nothing lye hid as though they ſhould ſeeme to neglect any one jot of their tranſitory happineſſe: Oh vaine men are we which take ſo much paine about the world wherein wee live, not onely with beaſts which have a better part in this kind of happineſſe, but alſo with wicked men worſe than beaſts: whence come unto us, envie, malice, variance, deceit, violence, wrong; yea, murthers, maſſacres, and deſolations! And this our inheritance we ſtand ſo much on, what ſerveth it, but for our bodily neceſſities, and that for a very ſmall time, though we uſe to ſay to mee, And to my heires for ever, whereas oft-times the third man doth ſcarſe enjoy a foot thereof? The ſoule is nothing the richer, though thou leave it nothing the wiſer, nothing the

better,

better, neither can it claime any part of it to follow her, when it muſt depart hence to another world, where ſuch earthly proviſion ſtands in no ſtead. And if the earth it ſelfe be but a point in reſpect of the firmament, every leaſt ſtarre thereof being eighteene times greater than the whole, what is thy goodly inheritance in compariſon of the higheſt heavens, but a ſhadow, or dreame of nothing? But this heavenly inheritance may be called ſo rightly in deed, and is worth the ſeeking for, worth the having, though a man ſhould ſell all, and loſe his life too, to which comes nothing that ill is, and from which goodneſſe never departs, an excellent place of entertainment, where comfort hath an everlaſting ſpring, not parched with heat, or nipped with cold, or beaten with violence

violence of windes, what can be ſpoken more glorioufly? here is God in the height of his favour, here are thouſands of Angels and Saints, like ſo many Starres about this infinite light, at whoſe preſence the Sunne is darkneſſe, here is Chriſt that died for us, and hath life in his hands to beſtow on us, Come, enter into thy Maſters joy. Canſt thou diſlike this company? how ever thou doſt like it, thou canſt not come to it by nature or art, it is not blood or birth that muſt preferre thee, thou canſt not claime it by deſcent; and in truth ſo great did our Lord eſteeme it, that he ſpared not one drop of his blood, but willingly ſhed it to purchaſe this inheritance for thee; and if all the croſſes or troubles of the world were put together and weighed in the ballance with this maſſe of glory?

they

they would not hold in weight ſo much as one graine of the infinite greatneſſe thereof: Holy men in times paſt have thought no labours too hard, no poverty too deepe, no death too ſharpe, if ſo enduring all their daies, they might be thought worthy to be made partakers of this grace; for true it is that no man brings worthineſſe with him to claime ſuch an unvaluable conſideration, but as it is grace, that makes us firſt to know our unworthineſſe, and then to imbrace Chriſt, who hath purchaſed for us this inheritance, and hath the right to beſtow it on us, ſo is it grace that leading us by the hands of obedience, & humility, doth bring us into the poſſeſſion of glory; this is an inheritance not for the body onely, but for the ſoule alſo, not while wee live here a few yeares, but to live

live above with God for ever, this right is ſuch as neither can be taken from us, nor exclude us from taking benefit with others, which have an inheritance as large as ours; What earthly inheritance hath ſuch priviledges, to be free from ſinne, and all puniſhment following it, as ſhame, and miſery: to ſee God face to face? This O man, is worthy thy ſurvay, by what title it may be poſſeſſed, what things they are which bee ſpoken of this heavenly Jeruſalem, what manſions, and commodities it hath, what freedome the dwellers enjoy which there abide: that lightned by faith, and lifted up on the toppe of holy meditation, thou maiſt ſo clearely, and fully behold the plot of this bleſſedneſſe, as that from henceforth, it may wholly withdraw thy love from this tranſitory,

tranſitory, vaine and vile world to an unſatiable deſire of it ſelfe. Be ſober, therefore, O my ſoule, be thankfull, and in thy raviſhment remember thou haſt not yet attained it, but this do forget that which is behind, and endeavour thy ſelfe unto that which is before, and follow hard towards the marke, for the high priſe of the calling of God in Chriſt; and this is a point ſo neceſſary, that Saint *John* ſaith, *Every one that hath this hope purgeth himſelfe as hee is pure.* And here my pen ſtoppeth, my meditations never.

Soli Deo Laus.

Contempt of the world.

THe worlds vanity which *John* reduceth unto three heads; the luſt of the fleſh, by which we may underſtand all kind of delicacy and wantonneſſe; the luſt of the eye, which may well intend covetouſneſſe, and the pride of life, whereby may be meant ambition about honour, are not from God which made the world, but from man, who forſaking God hath abuſed the world, and made both it and himſelfe, both vaine miſerable many out of the greatneſſe of their mindes have deſpiſed the world, counting themſelves too good for it, and the world too baſe for their imploy-

ment,

ment, they have rejected honors, as not worth the travell, or taking up, pleaſures as too beaſtlike riches as heavy and idle burthens, and all this they did from the equity of nature, which is contented with a little, and offended at exceſſe, which beares neceſſary, and common harmes, and is onely moved to avoid her owne follies: Chriſtians fetch their contempt from a higher Principle, What is time to eternity, a candle to the Sunne, a droppe to the Sea, a molehill to a mountaine, this world to the World to come, the creature to the Creator? and yet how few Chriſtians grow to that contempt of the world, for the love of God and godlineſſe, which the Philoſophers did in time paſt for the love of naturall knowledge, or morall vertue? Yee may ſee indeed amongſt Chriſtians,

ans many contemne the World out of a careleſſe contempt what become of themſelves, whether to ſinke or ſwimme, becauſe they are not ſuch as they have beene, nor could never yet learne to be the men they ſhould, of whom the world is as weary, as they are of it; but how few ſee you contemne it out of the true account which a Chriſtian ought to have of his owne value? I am the member of Chriſt, ſhall I couple the body of Chriſt to ſuch a Harlot as pleaſure is? I am Gods favourite, ſhall I by ambition hunt after that favour, which comes from man? I am a Citizen of Heaven, ſhall I digge deepe into the earth for a treaſure there? Many Chriſtians do not ſo much as the Philoſopher did by the eye of reaſon, but looke on things onely with the eye of the ſenſe, how can they then be equall

judges

judges of theſe matters, which reaſon it ſelfe could never reach unto? To the naturall eye, this world doth ſo interpoſe it ſelfe, that it ſeemes onely great, and the world to come nothing at all; but faith, which lifteth it ſelfe up, and beholdeth God, is made partaker of ſuch a heavenly viſion, that this inferiour world ſeemeth unto it to have neither goodneſſe to be deſired, nor greatneſſe to be admired, nor aſſurance to be truſted unto, onely it ſees many ſeeke it which periſh by it, and they which thrive in it, to part from it much the worſe, for the onely having it. Know my ſoule, that this world is but a market, if thou be in it as a buyer or a ſeller, thou ſhalt bee much diſtracted, if as a looker on, thou ſhalt have content, uſing it as though thou didſt not uſe it, thou mayſt be acquainted with the

the world, but beware of familiarity, open not thy ſelfe unto her, for the day will come that you two will be at ods, and if thou love her, thou wilt ſay then, I have gotten nothing by her, and perhaps it will caſt thee in the teeth, that it hath beſtowed too much on thee. How happy are they which keepe even reckoning with the world at all times, that as they call nothing of the world, ſo the world can challenge nothing in them, but are ready ſtill to depart out of it with a ſaving hand, provided for a better.

Sit Deo Gloria.

FINIS.